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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

PARENT RATIONALE FOR COMMUNITY-SPONSORED GERMAN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

BY

HILTRUD L. ALTE

A thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION.

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Edmonton, Alberta

FALL 1992

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Hilde Alte

11337 - 126 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5M 0R5

Date: September 3, 1992

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled PARENT RATIONALE FOR COMMUNITY-SPONSORED GERMAN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS submitted by HILTRUD L. ALTE in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION.

Douglas Parker

Dr. Douglas Parker, Supervisor

Joyce Edwards

Dr. Joyce Edwards

Manfred Prokop

Dr. Manfred Prokop

Date: September 3, 1992

ABSTRACT

There are as many as 896,715 people of German background living in Canada (Statistics Canada, 1989). In large part, due to those figures, the German language today is an important part of Canada's multicultural program. It is important to understand why people are loyal to their first language, and also to know what programs exist to teach and promote the German language, as well as how these programs are perceived by the language community.

The purpose of this study was to investigate parent rationale for German language programs for school-age children. One hundred and ninety-eight parents from two different program types in Edmonton, the German bilingual program and the Saturday schools, responded to a seven page questionnaire dealing with their reasons for sending a child to a German program.

Also investigated, through means of the questionnaire, was the parents' language background, the kind of support parents provided to the program, the rate of satisfaction with the existing German program, and their opinion with regard to the German language program in Edmonton.

It was found that the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were born in Canada. Thus, the dominant language spoken at home was English. However, a substantial number of parents came from a German language background. Most parents believe that learning a second language would be useful for their child/children in the future, although this might not necessarily be German. Because of the availability of the German program and/or their own language heritage, parents favour either the bilingual program or the Saturday schools. It was also found that parents liked to make the decision with the student as to what second language is learned.

Parents seem to believe that it is worthwhile to start the second language program at an early age (at the elementary level). While this belief is in accord with

earlier research suggesting that language learning becomes more and more difficult with advancing age, current theory stresses the additional time on task that an early start provides.

With regard to the quality of the existing German program it was found that parents in general are satisfied with it. However, some changes seemed to be desirable: for instance, parents wish an update of learning resources to further student interest in studying the language.

Parents provide much support to the German program through volunteer work, fund raising and other means. It seems that without this support it would be much more difficult to keep the German program alive.

PREFACE

In Germany, my teacher education program was focussed, in addition to other subjects, on teaching German at the high school level. When I decided to go to Canada, I immigrated to northern British Columbia. It was a deep surprise and overwhelming experience to find all people heartily welcoming me. Even my German teaching skills were not useless. I am happy to have the opportunity to write this thesis. Again, I found assistance and help whenever I needed it.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Language is in a continual state of development and change; the language itself develops as well as the use of it. In Canada, many ethnocultural groups continue to preserve their heritage language and culture while others are in the process of complete assimilation into the Canadian societal and linguistic mainstream. This situation in Canada often reminds me of what I experienced for the first time when I was growing up in a multigenerational household in a rural area of Germany. My great-grandparents spoke Low German which had been the common language for generations, although it was not the official language. My grandparents used both Low German when dealing with my great-grandparents, and High German when dealing with their children. My parents understood Low German, but would never use it themselves. I can therefore neither speak nor understand it.

From an international perspective, the language rights of ethnic minority groups differ considerably from country to country. Some countries, like the United States, appear to require the assimilation of ethnic groups into the Anglophone mainstream; others, for instance the Philippines, have allowed their citizens to use different vernaculars side by side without predominance of one language group over the other (Magsino, 1988). Canada's culture is characterized by an official policy of bilingualism and multiculturalism. Canada officially became a bilingual country in 1968 with the passing of the Official Languages Act. However, when Canada was proclaimed a multicultural society in 1971, many non-official language ethnic groups gained increased self-awareness (Prokop, 1990). This new pride in their ethnocultural and linguistic heritage brought about a greater demand for heritage

language programs by concerned ethnic communities. On the federal as well as provincial levels, provisions have been made to meet such demands (Schmidt, 1981). The Province of Alberta, in particular, took an enlightened position in regard to heritage language education. Especially in Edmonton, new community or school-based second language programs have been established, among them bilingual programs in six different languages: in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), German, Hebrew, Polish, and Ukrainian. The German bilingual program was established in 1978. Parents who wanted their children to become proficient in English and German saw a need for such a program and successfully demanded its realization. Today, parental involvement is accepted and encouraged by school boards and government officials (Alberta Education, 1989). The Honourable Jim Dinning, Minister of Education in Alberta, pays tribute to these developments by acknowledging that " Language Policy is a shared responsibility between the government and individual parents" (1989, p. 5). This viewpoint is also reflected in the most recent publication of the Canadian Education Association (1991). Concerning heritage language programs in Alberta, the CEA writes:

> The Language Education Policy of Alberta provides opportunities for students to learn a range of languages in addition to English or French, respecting the cultural diversity and heritage of Alberta and the desire of many parents who wish their children to learn heritage languages. (p. 15)

In 1977/78, parents requested the establishment of an English-German bilingual program from the Edmonton Public School Board. A Ukrainian bilingual program was already in existence at that time. What made parents ask for the German bilingual program? Did they believe that the German program would further their children's careers? Are all parents who have children in a German program from a German background themselves? Do these parents have ties in Germany that justify their children's participation in a German program? These are some of the questions that will be addressed in this study.

The teaching of the German language in Alberta has a long history. When the Province of Alberta was constituted in 1905, there were no high schools; the public school system was divided into eight "standards." French and German were offered in standards VI, VII and VIII (*Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages,* 1928, p. 349). In 1911, the old eight standards were regrouped into 12 grades, and the modern language instruction previously allotted to standards VI, VII and VIII was redistributed over four years.

During the First World War, student enrolment in German declined drastically, and French and Latin took its place. This was probably owing to the public reaction against everything German (Parker, 1988; *Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages,* 1928). Even after the war, the study of German had difficulty being accepted back into the school curriculum. In 1925-26, only 80 students, or 6%, were registered in German courses out of a total modern language registration of 1,302 students in Alberta. Although low, this percentage was even lower in Ontario where 1,968 students (2.9%) took German classes in 1926 out of a total second language enrolment of 68,713 students (*Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages,* 1928, p. 375).

The number of students taking German in Alberta slightly increased during the 1930s, but declined again during the Second World War (Prokop, 1990). A continual upward trend in enrolment has been observed since the mid-fifties reaching a clear peak in the seventies and eighties with more than 3,000 students enrolled.

When looking at the strength of the German ethnic community in Canada, it becomes apparent that there is a large number of potential German language learners. With 2,467,055 members, the German ethnic group is the third largest in Canada (Statistics Canada, 1989). Of those, close to 500,000 members live in the Province of Alberta. Prokop (1990) gives the number of Albertans using German as their home language as 27,485 (p. 2).

School-based and Community-sponsored German Language Programs

In Alberta, school-based core and bilingual German programs are offered in the public school systems. Private schools, the so-called heritage language schools, offer community-sponsored programs to children and adults (Parker, 1990). This study will examine aspects of both a school-based bilingual program and a community-sponsored German program. One important question that will be answered is why members of the German community see the need to maintain their heritage language and culture.

The English-German bilingual program has been evaluated by the Edmonton Public School Board (1981, 1982, 1983), and Prokop (1990) has considered the rationale for German language programs in his comprehensive study. Besides updating already existing research findings, this study will contrast the views of two parent groups in order to elicit differences and/or similarities in their reasons for sending their children to German language classes. This study also represents a partial needs assessment in regard to what kind of German language programs should be offered.

The English-German Bilingual Program

The English-German bilingual program was established in 1978/79 at the request of German-speaking parents (Prokop, 1990). They found support for their request in both federal and provincial multicultural legislation including the Canadian Multiculturalism Act and the Alberta Cultural Heritage Act of 1984 (Prokop, 1990; Sokolowski, 1990). Of course, in regard to education the School Act is of particular importance. The Alberta School Act of 1971 allows instruction in languages other than English or French (Parker, 1990). The bilingual schools in Edmonton, according to Prokop (1990), serve first of all the respective ethno-cultural community. The

author states that the clientele is primarily made up of children of immigrants who came after the immigration boom of the fifties and early sixties.

When the English-German bilingual program was started in the fall of 1978, it was "an experimental program in response to the wishes of parents who wanted their children to grow up with German as a strong second language" (The Association for English-German Bilingual Education of Edmonton, no date). It was the parents' hope that through attending the German bilingual program the child would become functionally bilingual in two languages (Edmonton Public Schools, 1981). Thus, from its beginning the program was a maintenance or enrichment program (Prokop, 1990; Cummins and Danesi, 1990) rather than a transitional program, like most bilingual programs in the United States (Hakuta, 1986). A maintenance program aims at strengthening language proficiency equally in both languages while a transitional program provides instruction in the heritage language only for as long as the child is not able to follow the same instruction in English. As soon as the child is proficient enough in English to understand the teacher, the time allotment for instruction in the heritage language will be gradually reduced until such instruction is eventually given up completely. Thus the goal of a maintenance program is proficiency in at least two languages, but in the transitional program it is proficiency in only one language.

The German bilingual program begins in kindergarten and progresses up to Grade six. From there, students can continue with a modified bilingual program at a designated junior and later a senior high school. In Alberta, at present, German bilingual programs exist only in Edmonton and its vicinity (Prokop, 1990). In Edmonton, three schools offer a German bilingual program, two elementary schools and one junior high school. An elementary bilingual program is also offered in Sherwood Park.

In the English-German bilingual program, German is used throughout 50% of the school day; the language is taught through German Language Arts and through instructional use in subjects such as Physical Education, Music, and Art. Teachers give

their instruction in German, which means that the "Direct Method" is employed in teaching the language (for a description of second language teaching methods, see Omaggio, 1986). Students are expected to become able to communicate in the target language, and they start using the language with ease usually after three years of instruction (Prokop, 1990). The curriculum, which is based on Alberta Education's guidelines, has been locally developed as have many teaching materials. Many reading and audiovisual materials have been imported from Germany.

The German Saturday Schools

The programs offered by the "Saturday" or heritage language schools may be said to be community-based (Parker, 1990). The German heritage language schools were established in response to the needs of many Germans who came to Canada during the fifties (Prokop, 1990). Some of those parents were concerned that their children might lose their fluency in the German language; others considered it necessary that their children learn to understand, speak, read and write German. However, the public school system offered German only from Grade 10 on, and many parents simply did not want to wait that long. They founded the so-called Saturday schools which held classes in German clubs, private homes or church facilities on Saturday mornings (hence the name "Saturday" school), traditionally a school-free day in Canada (Schmidt, 1981).

When these schools first started, most children still spoke German at home, and parents were primarily concerned that they learned to read and write. Towards the end of the sixties, teachers also had to teach the oral components of the language. The reason for this was that more and more children had by then been born and raised in Canada and did not speak the language fluently, if they had learned it at all. This meant a great curricular change for the operators of Saturday schools, and it was not until the founding of the "Association of German-Canadian Language Schools" in 1978 that this challenge

could be met successfully through teacher in-service and conference workshops (Schmidt, 1981).

Classes are given outside of regular school hours to either children or adults, be it in the evenings, during the week, or on Saturday mornings. In offering the credit courses German 10, 20, and 30, and granting credits in those schools in which the staff holds Alberta certification, attempts have been made, with support from Alberta Education, to integrate the heritage language and culture courses more closely into the public school program (Parker, 1990). In order to aspire to an even higher standard in language learning, Saturday school students who have passed German 10, 20, and 30 may sit an examination for the German Language Diploma awarded by the Conference of Ministers of Culture in Germany. The Diploma attests to an advanced level of proficiency in the language with which students should be able to follow university lectures presented in German.[1]

In Edmonton, most teachers in the heritage language schools are native speakers of German who are quite devoted to the success of the program (Schmidt, 1981) although they work without a contract and are only paid by the hour. Funding for the heritage language schools is partly provided by the German Government which supports the teaching of German language and culture abroad. About one-third of the money for operating the schools comes from the Alberta Government, and parents pay an annual school fee of $ 120.00 for the first two children attending; for each additional child, the fee is $ 30.00 per school year.[2]

The heritage language schools have played an important role in maintaining German language and culture in Canada in that they have responded to parents' needs at a time when the public school system offered German only from Grade 10 on. Prokop (1990) remarks that these schools did not get the public attention that they deserved "before the official inauguration of multiculturalism on October 8, 1971" (p. 238).

Student Enrolment

Student enrolment for the 1990/91 school year (as of December 1990) for the Province of Alberta was as follows:

Bilingual Schools	(Gr. K - 9)	473
Saturday Schools	(K - adult)	547
High Schools	(10,20,30)	2,317
		3,337 students[3]

Of the 547 students attending the Saturday schools, 279 do so in the city of Edmonton. The figure for the high schools includes the students in "German Literature," a program which is especially designed for students coming from the bilingual schools.

Purpose of the Thesis

The participants in this study are parents who had one or more children in either the bilingual German program or the Saturday school program in Edmonton during the 1990/91 school year. This study will focus on the reasons that these parents had for sending their children to school-based German bilingual schools or community-sponsored Saturday schools.

The following questions will be addressed:

1. What are parents' reasons for requesting German language programs?
2. To what extent do the parents see the types of programs described above as meeting their priorities?
3. How strong is the parental support for German language programs?

Need for the Study

There is not very much research available about the reasons why students are studying German in school-based and community-sponsored language programs. Without sufficient information, it is difficult to design a curriculum which will meet the needs of these students. The study's findings will also provide a base line against which to measure changes in this area in the future.

Implications of the Study

This study is concerned primarily with the reasons which parents have for sending their children to one of the German language programs. The parents' own attitude toward German language learning may allow inferences about their children's motivation for learning German (Colletta, Clement, and Edwards, 1983). When students are well-motivated to learn German, their linguistic achievements will be higher (Svanes, 1987).

Teachers and program planners may be able to learn from this study how parents feel about the program and what changes, if any, they would like to see made.

Delimitations

This study surveyed only the parents who had children participating in either the English-German bilingual program or the program offered by the German heritage language schools. The students themselves were not involved in the study.

Limitations

The study includes only German language programs in Edmonton and vicinity; a total of five schools.

Assumptions

Several assumptions underlie this study:

1. Having explicit motivation for learning German affects success in acquiring the language (Svanes, 1987);
2. Parents play an important role in determining the program route for their children (Whale, 1990);
3. Strong parental support may ensure the existence of the German language program (Fuentes, 1986).

Methodology

Three hundred and seventy parents were surveyed through questionnaires which were taken home by the students who attended credit German language classes at either a Saturday or an English-German bilingual school. The responses to the questionnaire were subjected to a frequency count, the results of which will be described below. The comments which parents made about the German program are categorized and described in this study.

For the purposes of the study, the researcher established contact with the Association for English-German Bilingual Education of Edmonton which represents the parents of children enrolled in the English-German program.

Definition of Terms

Community

The term "community" refers to a group of people whose members have common characteristics, for example, nativity, religion, interests, or pursuits which are not shared by those among whom they live. Examples would be the German, British, or Chinese community in a foreign city. It is in this sense of the word that community is used throughout the thesis (*Canadian Senior Dictionary*, 1979).

Official Languages

The official languages in Canada are English and French, as declared in the Official Languages Act of 1969 (Yalden, 1988, p. 1560).

Heritage Languages

Heritage languages are the non-official languages which are in use in various communities in Canada. Parker (1990) sees them as deriving from our rich linguistic heritage. However, as Cummins and Masemann point out (Multiculturalism Directorate, 1985), native peoples usually do not regard their languages as heritage languages. Heritage languages are also called "non-official," "ancestral," or "ethnic" languages. In many instances, a heritage language is the first language in the home.

Home Language

The term "home language" refers to the language that is spoken most often at home by the individual (Statistics Canada, 1989).

Mother Tongue

The term "mother tongue" refers to the first language learned in childhood. When Statistics Canada (1987) inquired about the respondent's mother tongue in the census questionnaire of 1986, it was implied that this language was still understood by the individual at the time of the census.

Second Language

A second language is the language that an individual acquires besides his or her first language (Government of Alberta, 1988).

Overview of the Study

Chapter One has provided the background to the study and described the German programs currently in existence in Alberta. The purpose of the thesis was stated as well as the need for the study, the implications, delimitations and limitations, the assumptions, and the methods used. Chapter One concluded with the definitions of some widely used terms. Chapter Two is devoted to a review of the relevant literature. Chapter Three will discuss the methodology, and Chapter Four will present the research results. In conclusion, Chapter Five will summarize the results and suggest areas for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

German-Canadians

In the 1986 census of Canada, almost two and a half million (2,467,055) respondents indicated that they were of German origin. However, not all of them were Germans of single origin, which means that both parents had to be German; the actual number of Germans of single origin (Table 1) was 896,715; slightly under the one million mark (Statistics Canada, 1989, 20% sample data). As mentioned in Chapter I, close to 500,000 people with either one or both parents of German origin live in the Province of Alberta. According to these census data, 438,675 people in Alberta have learned German as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 1987) while only 27,485 use German as their home language (Prokop, 1990, p. 2). In the census of 1986, about 4,000 Edmontonians indicated German as the language used in the home (Statistics Canada, 1989).

Brief History of German Immigration and Settlement in Canada

By 1867, the time of Confederation, about 200,000 people of German origin had settled in Canada, most of them in Ontario.[4] Forty-seven thousand lived in the Maritimes, including 20,000 in Lunenberg County, Nova Scotia. When the German Empire was established in the 1870s, fewer people from Germany entered Canada; instead, German-speaking Mennonites from Ukraine helped pioneer settlements on the prairies (Helling, 1988).

> Eastern Canadian settlers had doubted that the prairies could be settled, but the Mennonites confirmed that prairie soil was indeed fertile, and many of the colonies prospered. From 1880 to 1900, thousands of settlers of German origin (many from Eastern and Southeastern Europe) settled in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. (p. 896)

At the turn of the century, approximately 1,000 people of German origin entered Canada each year. This number rose steadily in the following years and reached a peak in 1912 and 1913. In each of these two years more than 5,000 Germans came as immigrants (Prokop, 1990). The German communities in Alberta, including the Josephsburg Colony (also called Medicine Hat) and those along the Calgary-Edmonton railway, reached a population of about 41,000 people by 1911 (Helling, 1988). The immigration numbers declined drastically during the First World War, falling to zero in 1918. But after the repeal of war-time restrictions on immigration in 1923, sometimes more than 10,000 immigrants of German descent entered Canada each year. Most of them settled as farmers in rural areas (McLaughlin, 1985). During the 1930s, the number was low, since the Canadian Government had restricted the flow of immigrants from all countries during the 1930s because of the economic recession (Prokop, 1990). The number of immigrants reached only about 1,000 per year.

The pattern of very small immigration numbers can be found, once again, during the years of the Second World War, between 1940 and 1945, the result of a ban on immigration of German nationals (Helling, 1988). After the ban was lifted in 1950, about 250,000 Germans arrived in Canada between 1951 and 1960, a number not exceeded ever before or after (McLaughlin, 1985). About 60 percent of them remained in Canada permanently. These numbers declined again because of the implementation of new immigration regulations in 1958 which aimed to reduce immigration of any kind into Canada. However, there was still an influx of from 5,000 to more than 7,000 immigrants of German ethnic origin during the 1960s. The year 1969 saw a decline to

about 3,000 immigrants; from 1970 to 1985, immigration figures have fluctuated between 1,000 and 3,000 per year (Prokop, 1990). Since the 1970s, increased immigration by German industrialists and investors has been under way (Helling, 1988).

Before the Second World War, most immigrants of German ethnic origin who chose to live in Alberta clearly had a rural orientation. But after World War II, the immigration pattern changed in favour of urban orientation, because these new settlers had a different training and background (Prokop, 1990). This trend not only has continued, but was strengthened by a general migration from rural areas into the urban centres, so that in 1981, about 70% of Albertans of German ethnic origin lived in or around the urban centres.

Use of German

First-generation Germans arriving in Canada usually maintain their mother tongue well and view the new country from their perspective of the old. The next generation, having acquired new cultural traditions and at least one of the official languages, attempts to adapt to the Canadian mainstream (O'Bryan, Reitz, and Kuplowska, 1976). German-speaking religious groups, such as the Hutterites and Mennonites, account for the exception to this rule in that they have kept their ancestral tongue alive for many generations. A long history of religious persecution, at least of the Hutterites, has made them determined to live in enclaves, often far remote from the rest of society (Laengin, 1986). Because of limited contact with their surroundings, their language could be preserved for a long period of time.

In many other immigrant families, a language shift has taken place already in that the second generation has given up German as the language used in the home. This is a significant phenomenon because "language shifts are a major factor in determining the

mother tongue of the following generation" (Statistics Canada, 1989, p. XV). It is often up to the third generation to make a consistent effort to preserve the cultural and linguistic heritage that derives from their parents and grandparents (Hobart, 1966, cited in O'Bryan et al., 1976). It is most likely that the third generation, then, will not learn German as a mother tongue, but as a second language through formal instruction at school.

Rationale for Heritage Language Preservation

In the United States, many German-speaking immigrants arrived during the nineteenth century and in some places, such as Cincinnati and Milwaukee, received schooling in their mother tongue with an increasing amount of instructional time in English over the years. The justification for teaching German at this early age was that the close family ties that existed among the immigrants would be preserved (Schlossman, 1983).

Heritage languages were usually taught with the goal of facilitating the transition from the ethnic mother tongue to English (Rodriguez, 1980; Clyne, 1983), a process not easily accomplished. An example of the problems involved is given by Rodriguez (1980), a Mexican-American, who described his transition from a Spanish-speaking boy to an English-speaking young adult. As a boy, he was the problem student in class and was socially disadvantaged. Regardless of his strong desire to be accepted by his classmates, the transition into the mainstream of the English-speaking society did not come easily for him. It meant a great loss on the one hand: "As we children learned more and more English, we shared fewer and fewer words with our parents" (p. 32). On the other hand, gaining a new identity turned out to be a great advantage for him.

As Hornberger (1987) suggests when describing the country of Peru, heritage languages have for a long time been regarded as a problem when children or adults were

not able to speak the language of the majority but only their mother tongue. Since the middle of the twentieth century, however, heritage languages have slowly started to be looked upon as a "right" and no longer as a "problem" (Fuentes, 1968; Hornberger, 1987). Tosi (1988) describes the situation in the United Kingdom where "in the early 1970s ethnic minority communities became more vocal about their aspirations to retain their cultural and linguistic heritage . . ." (p. 84). As a result of this new belief, in many countries, including both Canada and, to a certain degree, the United States, the trend in language attitudes has shifted towards heritage language maintenance (Hakuta, 1986; Magsino, 1988; Cummins and Danesi, 1990; Canadian Education Association, 1991). Nowadays, heritage languages are increasingly seen as a "resource" for individuals and society (Hornberger, 1987; Cummins and Danesi, 1990).

As expressed by the Government of Alberta (1988) in the new Language Education Policy, heritage languages are understood to enrich the cultural, artistic, and intellectual life, and to broaden the students' awareness and understanding of other countries, their languages and cultures. Elsewhere in Canada, Cummins and Danesi (1990) always speak of heritage language programs as enrichment programs.

Prokop (1990) who has described the status of the German language in Alberta calls the German heritage language program a maintenance program. In his comprehensive study, Prokop reasons that "of those parents of German ethnic origin who thought it was very desirable to retain German in Canada, four-fifths felt 'very strongly' that their own children should obtain a knowledge of German" (p. 95). O'Bryan et al. (1976), in their extensive examination of Canadian multiculturalism, compared ten different ethnic groups in five of the major Canadian cities with regard to their attitudes toward language retention. Among the Germans, who still possess some knowledge of their heritage language, approximately 60% responded to a survey, indicating that they find it "very desirable" or at least "somewhat desirable" to retain their ancestral tongue (p. 93). Thus there may be reason to believe, despite Prokop's

rather pessimistic view (1990), that the German language and culture will continue to play a valuable and important role in Alberta.

The Honourable Jim Dinning, Minister of Education in Alberta, in his keynote address to a conference focussing on language education policy from the Ukrainian perspective, saw Language Policy as a "shared responsibility between the government and individual parents" (1989, p. 5).[5] Although some parents were initially concerned that their children's education might suffer in a bilingual or immersion program, it has become easier for them to support heritage language programs because their fears about detrimental effects on the development of children's English or other academic skills have been shown to be groundless. Cummins (1980) who conducted research within the context of the Edmonton Ukrainian-English bilingual program, came to the conclusion that "this program appears to be just as 'educationally enriching' for the students as French immersion programs are perceived to be" (p. 25). As with any special program, the parents' participation is required for the maintenance of such a program. In the case of the German language, parents make great contributions to the existing programs. The evaluation of the English-German bilingual program in Edmonton showed that 88 percent of parents who had children in this program, were personally involved with the bilingual program in 1980-81 (Edmonton Public Schools, 1981). Again, 88 percent of parents were involved in the program in 1982-83 (Edmonton Public Schools, 1983). The types of parental involvement concerned arrangements for transportation, field trips, publicity, preparation of materials, help in classrooms, lunch hour supervision, and membership in the Association for English-German Bilingual Education.

As will be seen, it is not only parents of German background who send their children to German bilingual or Saturday schools in Edmonton. Many parents value second language instruction as an enriching learning experience for their child (Torres, 1988). Youssef and Simpkins (1985), who studied the attitude towards bilingual education of Arabic-speaking parents in the United States, found that the great majority

of parents believed that their children were better off in a bilingual than in a regular classroom. The same is true in Edmonton. In the evaluation of the bilingual (English-German) program of 1980-81, which was initiated by the Edmonton Public School Board, it was noted that sixty-six percent of the parents were "very happy" and twenty-five percent were "happy" with the program. The evaluation revealed that parents had various reasons for sending the children to German language programs, but most parents stated that second language learning would provide their child/children with a brighter future.

Schooling and Heritage Languages

Parker (1990) notes that there are the following ways to learn a heritage language and thus keep it alive:

- Learning from family members or other members of the community.
- Learning in community-operated schools, the so-called "Saturday schools."
- Learning through programs within the public school system.
- Learning through travel or residence in the country where the language is spoken, for instance during a student exchange.

There are three major types of heritage language instruction (Multiculturalism Directorate, 1985): First, there are bilingual programs within the public or separate school system. These programs exist in many countries in the world, including Canada, the United States, Europe, and Australia. In Alberta, the first Canadian province to do so, languages other than English or French were legalized as a medium of instruction in 1971, largely as a result of pressure from the Ukrainian community (Multiculturalism Directorate, 1985). Second, there are programs in which the heritage language is taught as a subject, the so-called "core" programs. These programs are administered by local school boards. Third, there are full- or part-time programs operated by the

ethno-cultural communities themselves. The full-time programs are found at private schools while the part-time programs are generally offered on Saturday mornings or after regular school hours on weekdays. Instruction can also be offered through a local church or parochial school (Deutschlaender, 1987).

At present, there are 50 schools in the Province of Alberta offering a German language program. Four of these schools offer an English-German bilingual program; four junior high schools and 34 high schools offer a German core program; besides the public schools there are eight private German language schools.

Parental Reasons for Encouraging their Children to Learn a Second Language

The rationale for second language learning has been discussed by several authors for specific educational contexts. Some authors address the rationale for second language learning in general (Albanese, 1987; Parker, 1990); others specifically consider second language learning in the elementary school context (Lipton, 1988; Quisenberry-Alvarado, 1989); and some consider German as a second language (O'Bryan et al., 1976; Prokop, 1990). The review of the literature in this chapter will be restricted to the parents' attitude towards second language learning because the parents represent the focus for this study.

Albanese (1987) finds three rationales for second language study. The first refers to vocational opportunities. Albanese takes a utilitarian approach when he considers a second or even third language necessary "to cope and survive in a multinational, multicultural world" (p. 461). Albanese also sees a humanistic value in second language learning. The second language experience, according to the author, allows the student to transcend the limitations inherent in the monolingual and monocultural experience and transmits "a profound sense of cultural pluralism" (p.

463). Moreover, on the cognitive level, the multilingual student will be able to process linguistic information more accurately and efficiently than a monolingual student could.

Lambert (1967) distinguishes between two types of motivation. He considers the orientation in second language learning to be instrumental if "the purposes of language study reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement, such as getting ahead in one's occupation . . ." (p. 102). Motivation is said to be integrative in nature if the student aims at learning more about the culture of the target language community through language study and strives to think like and act like a member of the target language culture. It is "as if he desired to become a potential member of the group" (p. 108). According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1991), integrative and instrumental orientations are positively correlated with one another. Thus one can conclude that 'instrumental' and 'integrative' motivation are points on a continuum rather than two poles at either extreme.

Parker (1988, 1990) has listed a number of reasons why parents want their children to learn a second language. These reasons include, among others, acquiring a job, gaining entrance into university or college, and meeting Canada's multicultural objectives. The author also determines the relative importance that each one of these reasons has for the parents and students. Parker has found that instrumental reasons, such as greater job opportunities and meeting entrance requirements for college or university, have a higher priority for parents than have integrative reasons, such as greater sensitivity to people from other cultures. Lipton (1988), considering second languages in the curriculum of elementary schools, expands on the rationale by pointing out how much easier it is for young children at elementary school age to learn a second language.

Quisenberry-Alvarado (1989) examined parental needs and interest in F.L.E.S. (Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools) programs. The results of a survey showed that 73% of the respondents felt "that knowledge of a foreign language makes a person

more competitive in the professional world" (p. 735). Positive effects on English language skills were also mentioned by 86% of the respondents.

In Edmonton, the Edmonton Public School Board surveyed parents who had a child in the English-German bilingual program (1981, 1982, 1983). They gave the following reasons for sending their child to the program (in order of frequency):

- they wanted the child to become bilingual;
- the parents themselves spoke German;
- they thought it easier to learn a second language at an earlier age;
- for cultural enrichment;
- the program was in the neighbourhood;
- they wished to help the child understand the German culture;
- Canada's official multiculturalism;
- for future job opportunities.

Summary

Because of the long history and the size of the German-speaking community in Alberta, the German language has played a very important role in the cultural life and the schools of the Province. While many immigrants and their children have always been quite ready to abandon German for English, others have sought to maintain their own and their children's knowledge of German by supporting and even pressing for German instruction in school. As a result, German is being taught in elementary English-German bilingual schools, as a core course in several junior high and high schools, and in community-sponsored heritage language schools. Previous research shows a variety of reasons which parents have for sending their child to a second language program, ranging from practical (for example, increased job opportunities) to

cultural (e.g. learning about other people, their customs and traditions) and political reasons (for example, because Canada is a multicultural society).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The Conceptualization of the Study

The study was carried out in the early summer of 1991. One hundred and ninety-eight parents from the English-German bilingual program in Edmonton and from two heritage language schools--one in Edmonton, the other one in Sherwood Park--participated in this study.

Topic Selection

When the researcher first talked to her supervisor about possible subjects for a thesis, he suggested that she look at heritage languages. Specifically, he suggested a topic related to the teaching of German since the researcher, who had emigrated to Canada in 1987 and had recently become a Canadian citizen, is a practicing German language teacher. Possible research questions were discussed concerning the kinds of German programs being offered in Edmonton, the rationale for these programs, and the parents' attitudes toward them. The researcher believed that it would be important to determine if the rationale for German language learning had changed substantially since the Edmonton Public School Board (E.P.S.B.) last conducted an evaluation of the German bilingual program in 1983. This study had focussed entirely on the bilingual program. The present study, while reassessing the parent rationale for the bilingual program, also includes parents who have children enrolled in the German heritage language schools.

Preliminary Stage of the Investigation

The first English-German bilingual program offered by the E.P.S.B. was set up in 1978 at the request of a parents' group, the English-German Bilingual Association of Edmonton. One would assume that the parents had articulated their reasons when they asked for the establishment of a German bilingual program. The researcher therefore contacted the E.P.S.B. and the English-German Bilingual Association and sought access to relevant documentation. Unfortunately, neither the E.P.S.B. nor the Bilingual Association was able to provide documents which might have given insights into the reasons for requesting the establishment of a German bilingual program. Such a rationale is only briefly addressed in information brochures and pamphlets of the English-German Bilingual Association,[6] but these were prepared after the program had been established.

In order to obtain additional information, the researcher interviewed a small group of seven or eight parents with children in a German 10/20 class in a Saturday school with a view to designing a questionnaire for use with a larger group. These interviews focussed mainly on the reasons that parents had for sending their child to a German language program in a bilingual or a heritage language school.

Design of the Questionnaire

The parent questionnaire, which was designed as a result of this preliminary stage of the investigation, was intended to reach as many parents in Edmonton as possible who had children either in a German bilingual program or at one of the two large heritage language schools.

Strict confidentiality and anonymity are requirements set by the Ethics Committee in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Before this study was

carried out, it was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Elementary Education as well as the Edmonton Public School Board. In order to protect the rights of the respondents, all answers were kept confidential and anonymous. In the covering letter (Appendix A) which parents were given, the purpose of the questionnaire was explained, and they were asked not to put their names on the questionnaire. All questionnaires were, however, numbered to identify the school each student attended. Thus the researcher would know how many questionnaires were returned from each of the five schools involved in the study.

Items

The questionnaire[7] (Appendix B) consists of four different kinds of items, namely multiple-choice, forced-choice, ranking, and open-ended items (Sudman and Bradburn, 1982). There are 42 items as well as a Likert scale for determining the parent rationale for the German programs; parents were also asked to comment on the program which their child attended. The questionnaire requires altogether between 10 to 20 minutes to complete.

The following information was sought:

a) details about the person who completed the questionnaire (items 1-3);

b) length of his/her stay in Canada (items 4-9);

c) the type of German program that the child attended (items 10-17);

d) the parents' language background (items 18-20);

e) the parents' opinion of various language programs (items 21-25);

f) the parents' preference with regard to a German language program (items 26-31);

g) the evaluation of the program (items 32-35);

h) the type of parental support (items 36-42); and

i) the reasons for having a child learn German.

Administration of the Questionnaire

Before the questionnaire was distributed at the five different schools, it was checked by the researcher's thesis supervisor and another graduate student for face validity. It was then filled out by a colleague of the researcher who was not a member of the German community. This colleague suggested several changes in the wording of the questionnaire so that possible misunderstandings of the questions could be avoided. Subsequently, the questionnaire was examined by a consultant and programmer of Computing Services at the University of Alberta. Adjustments, such as the rearrangement of items, were made. In agreement with principals and teachers, the decision was made as to what would be the best date to distribute the questionnaires, how many of them would be distributed and who would be responsible for doing it. In case insufficient questionnaires came back through the schools, follow-up interviews over the telephone were planned for those parents, where possible, who did not respond to the original questionnaire.

The parent questionnaire was given to the schools during the first week of May 1991. Parents were given a deadline of June 7th, 1991 to hand it back. A total of 370 questionnaires were distributed. In one school the researcher handed out the questionnaires herself and explained its importance to the students. In other schools, the school office staff, principal, or the classroom teacher assisted by taking on the responsibility for distribution and collection of the questionnaires. In addition, two principals wrote a covering letter for the questionnaire, with one principal aiming at an 80% return rate (Appendix C).

Characteristics of the Schools

Involved in the administration of the questionnaires were all bilingual and Saturday schools, i.e. two elementary schools, a junior high school, and two community-sponsored schools. Both elementary schools offer a bilingual program commencing at the kindergarten level and leading to Grade six. The enrolment figure for one school was 125 students in the German program in 1990/91; for the other, it was about 175 students. After having completed the German bilingual program at the elementary level, students can move on to a junior high school where German classes are offered for bilingual students in Grades seven, eight, and nine. The enrolment at the junior high school was 60 students in the German program in the 1990/91 school year.

Both Saturday schools offer German courses for children and adults. During the 1990/91 school year, the following courses were offered: Classes starting in kindergarten and leading up to Grade six; German 10, 20, 30 for beginners as well as students who already possess proficiency in the German language (German 31 is offered only for those students who prepare for the *Sprachdiplom* examination); adult classes are offered for beginners or intermediate learners. Both heritage language schools have German 10, 20, and 30 in their program which can be taken outside of regular school hours, usually by students between 12 and 16 years of age. These students are eligible for course credits when they pass the course. During the 1990/91 school year, both community-sponsored schools offered German credit courses. The total enrolment in German 10 and 20 was 27 students in one of the schools; the other school offered German 10, 20, and 30 in Sherwood Park. Here, three students were enrolled in German 10 and eight students in German 20. The German 30 class had an enrolment of 13 students. The reason for offering this program in Sherwood Park was that a German bilingual program was offered at one of the local elementary schools with a total enrolment of 199 students from kindergarten to Grade six in 1990/91.[8] Some of these students decided to continue

their German language study after Grade six and therefore took German 10, 20, or 30 on Saturday mornings. In 1990/91, the total enrolment in one Saturday school was 120 students in eight classes; the other Saturday school was attended by between 155 to 160 students in altogether 12 classes.

Analysis of the Data

The large number of questionnaires handed out made a tabulation by computer necessary. Before the data could be entered , all answers to the questionnaire had to be coded. On a separate sheet, the questionnaire number was written along with, in chronological order, the number one for all "yes" answers, a two for all "no" answers, and a zero for all blanks. When the parents themselves used numbers, for instance to indicate their child's grade, this number was simply transferred on to the coding sheet except in those cases where the number was higher than nine. When the number was higher than nine, a letter had to be used instead. Coding and data entry into the computer were done as soon as questionnaires came in.

The findings will be presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter is composed of four parts. In the first part, a brief evaluation of the response to the questionnaire will be presented, followed by a description of the distribution of students over the school grades and a sketch of important background characteristics of the respondents.

The second part addresses the three major research questions of this study, namely the parents' reasons for sending their children to a German program, the parents' priorities regarding different types of German language programs, and the extent of parental support for their children's German program.

In the third part, parents' attitudes toward the desirability of second language education in general and German language education, in particular, will be examined. The subsequent section summarizes the parents' comments about various aspects of the German programs, e.g., the teaching methods, the schools, teacher qualifications, the curriculum, and the parents' level of satisfaction with the German bilingual and the Saturday school program.

The fourth part concludes this chapter with an overall discussion of the research findings.

PART I

Rate of Return

Of 370 questionnaires distributed, 184 were returned. A follow-up by telephone produced another fourteen questionnaires. The rate of return for each individual school was as follows:

Schools	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questionnaires returned	Response Rate
Bilingual School 1	56	27	48.2%
Bilingual School 2	125	77	61.6%
Bilingual School 3	139	67	48.2%
Bilingual Schools Total	320	171	53.4%
Saturday School 1	20	15	75.0%
Saturday School 2	30	12	40.0%
Saturday Schools Total	50	27	54.0%
Total	**370**	**198**	**53.5%**

Earnest efforts were made to ensure as high a return of questionnaires as possible. Although the return rate did not meet standard expectations it was considered acceptable for present purposes. The highest return rate was found at those schools where the researcher maintained contact with parents and students. After the questionnaires had been distributed, the researcher checked once or twice a week at the schools as to whether questionnaires had come back. In two of the schools she had the opportunity to remind the teachers about asking their students for them. At one of these schools the researcher was permitted to talk to the students of two classes directly. She explained to them the importance of getting the questionnaires back in order to be able to present valid results in this study. When she checked again at this school, quite a number of questionnaires had indeed been returned. The researcher appreciated the

chance to talk to the students personally because they were the ones who helped to return the questionnaires. Unfortunately, this opportunity arose only at this particular school.

Distribution of Students by Grade

In the questionnaire, parents were asked to indicate the grade that their child was attending. These data, which are presented in Table 2, show that the majority of students attended the lower elementary grades in the bilingual program. The junior high school grades included students from either the bilingual program or the Saturday schools while high school grades were attended by Saturday school students only.

Characteristics of Respondents

Birthplace

One hundred and eight respondents (either father, mother, or guardian) were born in Canada, out of a total of 198 respondents (Table 3). In other words, 45.5% of the respondents were immigrants.

Questionnaire items six to nine, which asked whether the respondent's parents or grandparents were born in Canada, provided information about how long the individual family had been living in Canada. A relatively small number of respondents (13) indicated that only one of their parents was born in Canada (Table 4) while in the case of another 38, both parents were born here. Asked about their grandparents, 34 people responded that not more than two grandparents were actually born in Canada (Table 5). Only five of the respondents indicated having three or four grandparents who were born in Canada. The respondents' language background allowed inferences about their ethnic origin which will be described in the following paragraph.

Language Spoken at Home

Questions 18 and 19 were concerned with the parents' first language if this was not English (Tables 6 and 7). Eighty-seven fathers and 73 mothers claimed German as their first language, the largest group among the respondents. Many other languages were represented as well: 56 parents had an English language background; 12 respondents spoke Polish, 4 French, 5 Dutch, 1 Persian, 2 Arabic, 1 Portuguese, 1 Indonesian, 2 Hungarian, 1 Cebuana, 1 Danish, and 1 Spanish. Thus a very important point can be made: Parents who send their children to a German language program come not only from a German background, but from various other language groups as well, although one of the partners may be of German descent. Although in 87 or 44% of the families at least one parent had German as the mother tongue, English was the dominant language (used more than 60% of the time) in 158, or 80% of all families (Table 8). In 23 families the dominant language was German, and in 7 families Polish. Other languages appeared as well, but never more frequently than in a single family. However, where the children had been born in Canada, the language of communication in the home was usually English.

It may be concluded that in only 12% of the families which sent their child to a bilingual or Saturday school German was spoken as the primary language at home. This is a surprising result because one would predict this percentage to be significantly higher. But when German is added as the secondary language of the home it becomes clear that in 94 or almost 60% of the families the children heard German at least some of the time and presumably received support from their parents in their German homework (Table 9). Thirty-two families also spoke English at home; 4 families used Polish, 2 Dutch, 2 Portuguese, 1 Arabic, 1 Danish, and 1 family spoke French besides the dominant language. Only 20, or 10% of the respondents indicated that they used a third language in the home (Table 10).

PART II

Discussion of the Three Main Research Questions

In the following section, the three questions which provided the main focus of this study will be discussed. The findings are examined from the point of view of the respondents who had children in either the bilingual program or the Saturday schools. For the first question, a Likert scale was used to determine the strength of support for a given position. Each item was assessed on the "agree - disagree" continuum.

Question One: What are parents' reasons for requesting German language programs?

This question is important since it reveals the various parent rationales for having the children participate in the different German language programs. For the purpose of a clearer presentation of the results, the reasons are divided into two categories. Category One includes all practical reasons for learning German: improved job opportunities, entrance to university or college, travel, usefulness in the future, usefulness in a multicultural Canada, staying in a foreign country, and obtaining course credits.

Category Two includes all personal reasons for learning German: communication with relatives and friends, enjoyment of learning the language, learning about culture, broadening one's knowledge, and personal development.

Improved Job Opportunities (Table 11)

Eighty-nine respondents (44.9%) agreed that German could be important for their child for getting a job, while 42 (21.3%) disagreed with this statement. The stronger support for this rationale came from parents whose children were enrolled in the bilingual schools. Forty-eight percent of bilingual program parents supported this reason, compared to only 26% from Saturday schools, probably because the former parents see so much of their children's instructional time being allotted to German language learning that they hope it will further their children's career.

Entrance to University (Table 12)

One hundred thirty-two parents (66.6%) believed that proficiency in German was important for gaining admission to university, with the Saturday school group and the bilingual school group substantially in agreement with each other. This finding is not surprising since some departments actually do make the knowledge of a second language an entrance requirement.

Travel Opportunities (Table 13)

Between 80% and 90% of each group believed that knowing German would be helpful for travel. One hundred and seventy-five parents supported this rationale, with only four in disagreement. Parents clearly thought that proficiency in German would facilitate travel and make it more enjoyable and profitable.

Use of German in the Future (Table 14)

One hundred and ninety-three respondents (97.5%) saw German as being useful in the future while only one disagreed. Strong support for this claim came from both groups, which reflects the high value placed by parents on second language education.

Usefulness of German in a multicultural Canada (Table 15)

Parents in both groups were almost equally supportive of the rationale that knowing German would be useful in a multicultural Canada. One hundred eleven parents (56.1%) agreed that having German would be useful while thirty-one (15.7%) disagreed. Fifty parents (25.3%) were undecided. If these are added to those who disagreed, there seems to be substantial doubt about their belief that the opportunities offered by a multicultural society were sufficient motivation for learning German.

Staying in a German-speaking Country (Table 16)

One possible reason for a student to learn German might be that s/he wants to live in a German-speaking country. This view was shared by 108 respondents (54.5%) while twenty-six (13.1%) disagreed. Parents from the bilingual schools were less supportive of this concept, and those who disagreed, with only one exception, came from the bilingual schools. It may well be that this possibility was too remote for the parents of children in bilingual programs, considering their age.

Obtaining Course Credits (Table 17)

Among the 198 respondents, 106 (53.6%) supported this reason. Thirty (15.2%) disagreed, while 57 (28.8%) were undecided. Obtaining course credits appeared to be less important for parents from the bilingual program (49.7%) than for those involved in the Saturday schools (77.7%), probably because in the bilingual program students obtain "credits" by passing the grade.

Communication with Relatives and Friends (Table 18)

Since a number of families still have ties with friends or relatives in Germany or in other German-speaking countries, it was not unexpected that 158 respondents (79.8%) agreed with the statement that a knowledge of German was necessary and desirable to communicate with relatives and friends. The strongest support, with 92.6% in agreement, came from Saturday school parents while 77.8% of bilingual school parents supported this reason. As the former were reported more frequently to have German as a mother tongue, they may have closer ties to relatives and friends in a German-speaking country.

Learning for Enjoyment (Table 19)

To learn German simply for enjoyment was seen as a sufficient reason by 182 respondents (91.9%) with 14 parents (7.1%) either undecided or in disagreement. The support from Saturday school parents (96.3%) and bilingual program parents (91.2%) was almost equally strong.

Learning about Culture (Table 20)

One hundred and sixty-nine respondents (85.4%) believed that learning German would help the student learn about culture. Only 3 respondents (1.5%) disagreed, all from the bilingual schools.

Broadening the Student's Knowledge (Table 21)

Another statement that received broad support dealt with the extent of the parents' belief that learning German broadens the student's knowledge about other people. One hundred and eighty (90.9%) agreed while only two respondents (1.0%) disagreed with this statement.

Fostering Personal Development (Table 22)

This reason for studying German received virtually unanimous support, since 184 respondents (92.9%) believed that this was an outcome of German language learning; only four (2.0%) disagreed.

From interviews with parents it became apparent that the maintenance of cultural traditions and the language heritage was among the reasons which parents had for sending their children to a German language program.

Summary and Discussion

The following table presents the reasons for learning German according to the support which they received from either Saturday or bilingual school parents.

	Saturday Schools	Bilingual Schools
Usefulness in Future	100.0	97.0
Broadening Knowledge	96.3	90.1
Enjoyment	96.3	91.2
Personal Development	96.2	92.4
Communication	92.6	77.7
Learning about Culture	92.6	84.2
Travel	85.2	88.9
Course Credits	77.8	49.7
Stay in Foreign Country	70.3	64.3
Entrance to University	63.0	67.3
Canada's Multiculturalism	48.1	57.3
Job Opportunities	25.9	48.0

Note. All above figures represent percentages. These percentages include "strong agreement" and "agreement."

Most of the reasons for sending a child to a German language program found rather strong support from the respondents, with little difference between the Saturday school and the bilingual school parent groups. It is significant, however, that the more specific the statement was, the less support it would receive. This was especially true for the two reasons which read: Canada's multiculturalism, and improved job

opportunities. Parents did not seem sure whether there are jobs requiring a knowledge of the German language. Most parents considered personal reasons, such as communication with relatives and friends, more important than the practical ones. If this perception were ever to change then major implications for the teaching of German could be the result. If parents were more aware of concrete opportunities offered by a multicultural society and a job market dependent on well-educated graduates with a sound knowledge of a second language, then parents might wish to have an even greater proportion of their children's instructional time allotted to German language learning, since they would hope that it would improve their children's career opportunities.

Question Two: To what extent do parents see the different types of German language programs as meeting their priorities?

Parents were presented with a list of six different types of German language programs. Five of these programs are currently offered by public and/or private schools; the elementary core program, which is not offered at present, was included on the list to give parents another option from which to choose.

Parents were asked to evaluate their support for the following program formats:

a) Community/Saturday school programs

b) Elementary school, thirty minutes daily (core program)

c) Elementary school, 1/2 day (bilingual program)

d) Junior high school, forty to fifty minutes daily (core program)

e) Junior high school, 1/2 day (bilingual program)

f) High school, fifty to sixty minutes daily (core program).

Parents were asked to rank these programs by writing a number from one to six beside each option. Number one would indicate their first choice; number two, their second, and so forth up to number six which indicated the program least preferred.

Parental reactions to the various options are discussed below. The first and second choice statistics will be given only while complete information is contained in the tables referred to.

Community/Saturday school programs (Table 23)

Not surprisingly, the greatest support for this option came from the Saturday school parent group, with 37% selecting this option as their first or second choice as compared with 2% of bilingual school parents.

Elementary school, thirty minutes daily (core program) (Table 24)

This route, although not offered in schools at present, was included in the list of options as an alternative to the elementary bilingual program. In general, parents from the Saturday schools (37.0%) were more supportive of this option than were parents in the bilingual school group (20.4%). Bilingual program parents may feel the 30 minutes or core programs are inferior to what they already have. Where bilingual program parents chose this option it may have indicated some dissatisfaction with the bilingual program.

Elementary school, half day (bilingual program) (Table 25)

Predictably the greatest support for this concept came from parents in the bilingual program group (93.6%). Saturday school parents were much less in favour (48.1%) because they may have had good experiences with other programs.

Junior high school, forty to fifty minutes daily (core program) (Table 26)

Here, the greatest support came from parents with children in Saturday schools (44.4%) because for them it could mean a viable alternative to the existing Saturday school program. Parents from the bilingual schools offered some support (20.5%). Saturday school parents may be having difficulty encouraging their children to attend school for still another day after the regular school week.

Junior high school, half day (bilingual program) (Table 27)

Parents from the bilingual program (69.1%) were generally in favour of this approach while parents in the Saturday schools (22.2%) supported the concept to a much lesser extent. Possible reasons for this low level of support might include dissatisfaction with the program; furthermore, Saturday school parents may not consider it as an option because they are content with what they have.

High school (core program) (Table 28)

Parents in the two groups were not at all enthusiastic in their support of this concept (Saturday school 14.8%; bilingual school 20.5%). This may mean that parents for whom it is a concern that their children learn a second language well, consider it too late to start German language learning at this level, given the small amount of time that would be available.

Summary

Asked about their program priorities, most parents from the bilingual program gave the elementary bilingual program as their first choice, which demonstrates the great loyalty of the parents to the bilingual program. This same parent group showed hardly any support for the Saturday schools (1.8%). More than 70% of the Saturday school parents divided their support evenly between the Saturday school program and the elementary core program.

Question Three: How strong is parental support for German language programs?

Strength of parental support is likely to be a function of satisfaction with the program. The level of their overall satisfaction with what is currently taking place in their school will influence many of the parents' decisions about participation in the various activities. Parental support can be measured in a variety of ways. If parents go to some length to enable their child to participate in a program it indicates an element of commitment to it. Driving the child to and from school when the program is not available in their immediate neighborhood and bussing is not available is one such way. Other kinds of support are helping in advertising the program and raising money to support it. Committee work centered on the program is one more. The discussion which follows will look at each of these topics in turn beginning with the first-mentioned.

Degree of Parental Satisfaction with the Program (Table 29)

The overall level of satisfaction was very high. Parents with children enrolled in the bilingual program appeared to be the most satisfied. In responding to this question, 57.3% felt that their program was highly effective, while another 34.5% felt the program to be generally effective (total 91.8%). Parents with children enrolled in the Saturday school program were somewhat less positive, since 29.6% saw their program as highly effective while 55.6% felt that it was generally effective (total of 85.2%). There were three bilingual school parents (2%) who did not consider their program as effective.

Parental Participation (Table 30)

In order to provide a clearer picture of parent involvement in the various programs, the pertinent information is presented in the form of a table. All figures represent percentages of the total number of parents in each group.

	Volunteer Work	Driving	Donations	Fund Raising	Committee Work	Promotion	Other
Saturday School	51.9	70.4	48.1	40.7	22.2	40.7	3.7
Bilingual School	62.0	58.5	50.9	48.0	13.5	40.9	6.4

While there was virtually no difference between the two groups with regard to donations and promotional activities, the differences regarding fund raising, committee and volunteer work, and driving were substantial. The greater involvement in volunteer work by bilingual program parents may be explained by the fact that the bilingual program as a full, parent-initiated school program requires more volunteers for its

continued success than the Saturday school program. On the other hand, more Saturday school parents drive their children to school because bussing is not available to them.

In addition to the activities shown above, some parents in the Saturday schools mentioned in their comments that they had helped to build contacts to support the program. One parent's particular form of support was, "Learning German so I can make it easier for them, the children, to learn." Another parent prepared newsletters and helped organize the tenth anniversary celebrations of the German Bilingual Association in Sherwood Park where the Saturday school was located.

The table presented above illustrates the extent of the participation of parents in the bilingual program. In their open-ended comments regarding this question a number of parents indicated other ways in which they had supported the program:

- teaching the language at home (3 parents)
- verbal endorsement to interested parents/friends (3 parents)
- paying high transportation costs (3 parents)
- mall displays (2 parents)
- moving into the area so that children might be able to attend the program (2 parents)
- helping with field trips (2 parents)
- preparing and/or translating classroom materials (2 parents)
- being a guest speaker (2 parents)
- encouragement for classroom teacher (1 parent)
- running lunch program (1 parent)
- lobbying of school trustees to obtain funding

The comments of parents offered under 'other' are interesting. Under this heading, one parent stated, "I pay very high education taxes yearly to help support the cause along with every other citizen in Canada."

In summary, much parental support was demonstrated by both parent groups for German language programs during the school year. One hundred and ninety-three respondents helped finance the program either through donations, program fees or fund raising; 120 respondents devoted their time as volunteers; 119 respondents drove the children to and from school (which almost always is required in the case of the Saturday schools); 81 promoted the program in either written or oral form; 29 parents worked on committees, and 12 respondents did some other kind of work in order to assist the German language programs. Such an extensive display of different activities was made possible because many parents were involved in more than one activity in support of the German program.

PART III

Attitudes toward Second Language Education

In addition to questions dealing specifically with the German program, the parents were asked to react to a series of statements having to do with the study of German or with second language education in general.

Statement One:

Every child should have to study German. (Table 31)

This statement found very little support among the parents. Only two Saturday school parents and four from the bilingual program were in agreement. However, many parents felt that German should be among those languages offered in the second language program in elementary, junior high and high schools as will be shown below in the discussion of Statement Three.

Statement Two:

Every child should have to study a second language, but should be allowed to choose the language. (Table 32)

Almost two-thirds of the respondents (64.6%) were in agreement with this statement. Strongest support for this position came from the Saturday school parents (70%), with parents from the bilingual program being slightly less in favour (64%). It was stated earlier and is confirmed here that parents placed a high value on second language education for their child; however, it would be too much to expect that every respondent should agree with the above statement. If a child had a talent in an area such as athletics, for example, the parents might consider the knowledge of a second language of minor importance for their child's future career.

Statement Three:

German should be available in every elementary school. (Table 33)

This position found support from 79 out of 171 parents in the bilingual program (46%) and from 13 out of 27 in the Saturday school program (48%). Since the wider availability of German classes at the elementary school level would serve both groups the rationale for parents supporting this option is obvious. Overall, 92 respondents of a total of 198 (46.5%) felt that German should be available in every elementary school. Because of the strong formulation of the statement, which read "in every elementary school," the support for this statement was rather low, and some parents did only agree by explicitly adding that German should be offered only if the number of students warranted it.

Statement Four:

German should be offered in every junior high school. (Table 34)

Eighty-five parents from the bilingual program (50%) and 18 from the Saturday schools (67%) believed that German should be offered at this level. If the total number of respondents is considered, 103 out of 198 (52%) supported this statement. At present, there are four junior high schools in Alberta which have German in their second language program.[9] Parents who have a child at an elementary bilingual school have the option of sending the child to the junior high school bilingual program afterwards, but they may choose not to do that which would explain their rather strong support for the above statement.

Saturday school parents expressed an even greater support for this statement because this would give them the option of sending their children to a German program during regular school hours.

Statement Five:

German should be offered in every high school. (Table 35)

One hundred parents with children in the bilingual program supported this position (59%) as did 21 parents (78%) from the Saturday schools. The provision of German at this level received the greatest amount of overall support, since 121 parents out of the total group of 198 (61%) were in favour. Parents obviously saw the opportunity for continuation of German language learning until their children would graduate from high school. This seemingly contradicts what was said earlier in this study about the parents' priorities; but when parents were described as not very enthusiastic about the senior high core program, it meant that they did not give it their

first or second choice. However, 42% of the respondents actually supported this option as their third choice.

Statement Six:

Languages other than German should be available at the elementary school level.

(Table 36)

There were 129 respondents from the bilingual program (75%) and 15 (56%) from the Saturday schools who supported this position. Overall, 144 (73%) agreed that other languages should be offered at this level. It is possible that these parents may have had French in mind for their own children, of course as one among many other options.

Statement Seven:

Languages other than German should be available at the junior high school level.

(Table 37)

The availability of languages other than German at this level did not receive the same amount of support from the bilingual program parents (40%) as it did from the Saturday school parents (59%), possibly owing to the fact that the former group may have seen it as a threat to their own program. The difference in the Saturday school group's reaction to this suggestion may be explained by the fact that their children are learning German after regular school hours and would have additional second language options with languages other than German at the above mentioned school level.

Statement Eight:

Languages other than German should be available at the high school level.

(Table 38)

Sixty-six respondents from the bilingual program (39%) and 16 from the Saturday school parents (59%) were in favour of additional languages being offered at this level.

Over the entire group, the availability of languages other than German was supported by 144 respondents (73%) at the elementary school level, by 85 (43%) at the junior high school level and by 82 (41%) at the high school level.

Statement Nine:

Who should decide whether a student takes a second language or not?

(Table 39)

Approximately three-quarters of the parents in each group saw this decision as a shared responsibility between themselves and their children. For the group as a whole, 152 parents (77%) believed in this approach. One hundred and twenty-seven parents (74%) in the bilingual group supported this idea as did 25 in the Saturday school program (93%).

In the bilingual program group, 31 parents (18%) felt that they would like to see the parent make such decisions, an opinion which was not shared by respondents in the Saturday school program, probably due to the more advanced age of their children (usually between 12 and 16 years for students in German credit courses).

As for allowing the student alone to make this decision, four parents (2%) from the bilingual program group and two parents from the Saturday schools (7%) supported this concept.

Parents' General Comments

The last page of the questionnaire provided space for parents to write down their comments about the German language programs. These comments will be addressed in the following section. It should be kept in mind that some points raised were of concern to parents in both programs.

Teaching

Parents generally expressed satisfaction with the teaching and learning of German although several parents saw the need for a greater emphasis on oral skills. They valued the five skills approach that includes listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural understanding. This last skill in particular was mentioned by parents as being important for them. "Exposure to German/European culture" was one parent's description of this component. Parents felt that learning about German culture should include religious customs, especially at Easter and Christmas. Through cultural learning, parents felt the school would best nourish the students' interest in the language in order to keep the heritage alive. Parents appreciated that updated learning materials and contemporary topics made the process of learning German more interesting.

A feeling of anxiety resulting from not being able to help their child was expressed by some parents, especially bilingual program parents who did not speak German at all. These parents were concerned because they could not help their child with homework assignments. Some parents felt that teachers did not assign enough homework.

Schools

In the Saturday schools, children can keep up contact with former schoolmates. Without the Saturday schools, students would lose contact with their friends, because, after completing elementary school together, students move on to different junior high schools. Their only chance to meet is on Saturdays at the German classes. This allows for peer support in learning German, which parents find very important.

The opportunity offered by the Saturday schools to pass on German language knowledge to their children was greatly appreciated by the parents. The parents found it an incentive that students could earn high school credits through these courses.

Some parents wished to have German instruction continued during regular school hours, although this was not possible at the time of the administration of the questionnaire. Other parents expressed the desire to have Saturday school classes moved to another day, because with German classes on Saturday mornings, family activities requiring the whole weekend could not take place. One parent mentioned as an additional disadvantage that with German classes on Saturday mornings it was never possible to sleep in.

Teachers

With regard to the bilingual program, parents raised two points of concern: lesson structure and teacher commitment to the program. In general, parents considered the teaching staff as knowledgeable; however, with regard to teacher commitment, there was one parent who commented as follows: "Teachers should be just as dedicated to this program as we (the parents) are. I often find that teachers just 'have the job' . . . forgetting that without a bilingual program they would not 'have a job'."

Parents suggested that a teacher exchange program with Germany could be helpful in this regard (it should be noted that such a program already exists). On one hand, it would help the teacher improve his or her own language skills where necessary; on the other hand, it would deepen the knowledge of German culture, which is especially important for those teachers not born in Germany. For the above mentioned reasons parents clearly would appreciate some direct contact with educational institutions in Germany. If these contacts were impossible, a look at bilingual programs in other provinces was suggested as being helpful. One mother mentioned in her comments that she found the German bilingual program in Winnipeg to be very well organized. She proposed that it could, perhaps, serve as an example.

Curriculum

More up-to-date audio-visual materials were requested by parents for the Saturday schools. This parental concern does not seem entirely groundless because the movies which are shown to Saturday school students (for example, "Das Wirtshaus im Spessart" and "Winnetou") are somewhat old-fashioned in that they fascinated youths in Germany some 20 or more years ago although some students still seem to enjoy them.

In the German bilingual program, parents drew attention to a lack of curriculum materials.

Level of Satisfaction with German Programs

Many parents expressed satisfaction with the program in which their child was enrolled. In response to the question about what they liked about their children's German program, typical parent replies included: "I like everything," or "Generally it is o.k." One parent said about the junior high bilingual program: "I am very happy with

this program!" Parents liked the school environment in the bilingual program which they called "caring."

With regard to language skills, parents expressed concern that not enough grammar was being taught at school. It was the parents' judgement that their children were unable, even after several years of instruction, to use the German language correctly. This shows that parents value innovative approaches to second language teaching and learning not just for the sake of trying something new but for the sake of a greater proficiency in the target language.

Unfortunately for some parents, all bilingual schools are located in the south or east of Edmonton. If parents who live in the north intended to send a child to the bilingual program they would certainly have to come to terms with the problems of high transportation costs and long travelling hours for their children.

PART IV

Overall Discussion of the Results

Parental Origin

The majority of the parents (55%) who responded to the questionnaire were born in Canada. It was therefore no surprise that the dominant language spoken in the home for most families was English, which means that the children did not learn German as a mother tongue but as a second language, in some cases with support at home. This was especially true where the children had been born in Canada.

An important finding in this study was that parents who send their child to a German language program come not only from a German background, but from many different language backgrounds even though the majority of parents are still rooted in

German. Parents who do not have a German language background, but who nevertheless choose to send their children to a German language program, must place a high value on second language instruction. Parents with a German language background hoped to keep their heritage language alive through formal instruction in the language at school.

Parent Rationale for a Program

The majority of parents (97.5%) believed that a second language would be useful for their children in the future. Another 93% of respondents appreciated the positive impact on the personal development of the child, and 92% acknowledged the enjoyment of learning a second language. The parents obviously saw their children's expanded horizon as a desirable outcome of second language learning. Eighty percent of respondents saw a need for German for communicating with relatives and friends. "To broaden one's knowledge about other people" and "for travelling" were also reasons strongly supported by parents. The above mentioned results show that parents' reasons for having a child learn German cannot easily be classified as either predominantly practical, or as predominantly personal.

Program Preferences of Parents

When parents were asked about their program priorities, 85% named the elementary school bilingual program as their first choice. Thus parents voted for a program option that provides their children with an opportunity to learn German fluently and starts instruction at an early age. The strong support for offering second language learning at the elementary school level may be explained by the widespread conviction that language learning becomes more and more difficult with increasing age. This opinion was also expressed by parents in interviews conducted by the researcher.

While the majority of parents who opted for the elementary school bilingual program as their first choice actually had a child attending this program (92.4%), 11 parents from the Saturday school group also favored this option (40.7%). For the bilingual school group, it seemed to be a matter of "we know what we like and we like what we know." Not surprisingly, a much higher percentage of Saturday school parents (29.6%) opted for the Saturday school as their first choice than was the case with parents from the other program (1.2%).

Parents' Satisfaction with the German Program

The great majority of the respondents (90%) saw the German program as highly or generally effective. In their open-ended comments, parents expressed general satisfaction with the program. Parents very much valued the five-skills approach to German language learning described by Parker (1988). Besides the four traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, the five-skills approach defines cultural understanding as an important fifth skill to be included in second language teaching. Since parents obviously saw German cultural traditions as worthy of preservation, they felt that German cultural traditions should be part of the second language curriculum.

Support

The extent of satisfaction with the program was reflected in the support which it received. This support can be measured in terms of the time, money and effort that parents were willing to invest in the program. There was strong parental support for both the bilingual program and the Saturday schools in terms of volunteering and driving the child to school. More than half the parents in these two groups were involved in these activities.

Virtually all parents (94%) also helped to finance the program either through donations or fund raising. In addition there were parents who worked on committees, on program promotion and in other forms of program support with parents being involved in more than one activity at a given time.

Program Options

Students were enrolled in German programs from kindergarten to Grade 12, and quite a few of them also had brothers and sisters in the program. However, very few parents supported the idea that every child should have to study German, although the study of a second language was widely regarded as an integral part of any school curriculum. Parents certainly saw the study of German as one option among other possible choices because 92 respondents (46.5%) felt that German should be available in every elementary school. More than half the parents wished to have the teaching of German carried on through high school. Strong support was demonstrated for languages other than German at the elementary school level (73% of all respondents). However, for junior high and high school the support decreased to 43% for the former and 41% for the latter.

In response to the question, "Who should decide whether or not a student takes a second language?" most parents (76.8%) felt that it should be a joint decision of parents and children. The position that the student alone should decide was supported by only 3% of the respondents while 15.7% considered the parent as the sole decision maker.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of the study, reflections on the literature in relation to the study, a discussion of the implications of the study's findings, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

This study has presented results that were obtained from a questionnaire given to parents who had a child or children enrolled in a German language program during the 1990/91 school year.

Three hundred and seventy questionnaires were distributed at schools in Edmonton and vicinity of which 198 were returned. Involved in this study were two elementary bilingual schools, one junior high bilingual school, and two private German schools, the so-called "Saturday schools." Information which the parents were asked to provide included:

a) Origin and language background of the parents and grandparents of the child who was enrolled in the German program.

b) Reasons that parents had for sending their child to a German program.

c) Parents' program priorities and the extent to which these were met.

d) Level of satisfaction and strength of support that parents provided to the German program.

e) Parental attitudes toward learning second languages in general and toward learning German, and general comments about the German program.

Origin of Parents and Home Language

The results showed that the majority of the parents who had sent their child to a German language program were born in Canada. Thus, the dominant language spoken at home was English, and most children did not learn German as their first language. This was especially true where the children in the family had been born in Canada. However, there was a substantial number of parents who claimed German as their first language, so that the majority of children enrolled in a German program heard German at least some of the time at home and could receive help with their homework. But there were also families, although relatively small in number, where neither father nor mother were able to help because they had a completely different language background.

Parental Rationale for German Programs

Parents were asked to indicate their reasons for sending their child to a German language program. Parents from the bilingual program were virtually unanimous in their opinion that having another language might be useful in the future. Thus bilingual education was looked on as being an investment in their child's future; this was more true with regard to the personal development of the child than with regard to concrete job opportunities, probably because of a lack of information with respect to the latter. No major difference was found between bilingual program parents and parents from the Saturday schools regarding the above mentioned reason. The difference was substantial, however, with regard to the issue of communication with relatives and friends. Here, almost all Saturday school parents were in agreement while only about three-quarters

of the bilingual school parent group saw this as an important reason for studying the language. Saturday school parents may well have had closer ties to German-speaking relatives and friends in Canada or abroad than did bilingual school parents. Obtaining course credits again found stronger support as a reason from Saturday school parents indicating the parents' appreciation of their children's being granted credits for learning German. These parents also appreciated the fact that their program was officially recognized. As mentioned earlier, the personal development of the child was among the reasons that were strongly supported by both parent groups as was the enjoyment of speaking another language and possessing a greater knowledge about German speaking people.

Parents' Program Preferences

Eighty percent of the parents favoured the German bilingual program at the elementary school level as their first preference with the greatest support coming, predictably, from parents with children in this type of program either at the elementary or junior high school level (92.4%). This shows the parents' great loyalty toward the program that was established with their help. However, these same parents were in favour of having German language learning continued at both the junior and senior high school levels.

Saturday school parents also seemed to regard their own program as a viable alternative to the other options although they demonstrated similar support for an elementary core program. Overall, both parent groups seemed to like having their child start German language learning at an early age. As for the availability in the curriculum of languages other than German, the decreasing support for this concept as the grade level increased may be based on the fact that parents want to see German continued in junior and senior high school. Parents seek program continuity, and if their child is

learning German in elementary school, they would probably wish the language to be available at the upper levels too.

Parental Satisfaction with and Involvement in German Programs

Parents seemed very satisfied with the bilingual and Saturday school program. Ninety percent of all respondents rated the German program as highly or generally effective. The high level of satisfaction in turn created a high level of parental support. Parents provided support to the German program in a variety of ways, so that it seems that present German language programs would not exist without parental support. This became very obvious in the case of the bilingual program. Here, parents volunteered, worked on committees, helped with fund raising, drove the child to school or even moved closer to the school and advertised to promote the program.

The reason offered by Saturday school parents that they wished their children to be able to communicate with relatives and friends could not alone account for the considerable amount of time and effort given to their program which relied heavily on parental support. Most of the parents drove their child to school because no school buses are available for this program. Since the Saturday schools are operated by the community, parents had to pay a program fee at the beginning of the school year. They also volunteered and promoted the program orally or in writing.

Parents' Attitudes and General Comments

While parents appreciated the fact that their children had the opportunity to learn German, they placed a high value on second language learning in general. Parents saw a well-rounded personality as one important outcome of second language learning. German was still very much preferred, however, since 46.5% of respondents supported

the statement that German should be available in every elementary school. The wider availability of German programs would simply give parents more options from which to choose. An even higher percentage (52.0%) believed that German should be offered in every junior high school, and the amount of support increased again (61.1%) with regard to German core programs at high schools. Here students would have the opportunity to earn course credits, and with German also included in the second language curriculum, a wider spectrum of second languages would be offered.

An unexpected but desirable finding in this study was an indication of the parents' strong support for languages other than German at the elementary school level. Thus parents seemed to be in support of a multilingual education that would provide the student with various language learning experiences. Possibly reflecting changes in the way in which families operate, parents preferred to make the decision about second language study together with their child. This might be a result of the liberalizing trends of the 1970s and 1980s; another possibility is that older children are given more opportunity to decide for themselves.

The increasing support for German at junior high and high school corresponded to a decreasing amount of support for languages in general at these levels. Perhaps parents wanted to indicate that German was not offered frequently enough in junior high and high schools.

In their final comments, parents suggested that updated learning materials were necessary to strengthen student interest in the subject and that new teaching approaches would make German language learning more enjoyable. Parents very much appreciated the school's efforts to develop contacts with countries where German was spoken, since learning about culture was one of the topics that parents considered to be very important. This was partly owing to the fact that, in many cases, their own German cultural traditions had been inherited from their own parents and grandparents who had emigrated to Canada just before or after the Second World War.

Reflections on the Literature in Relation to the Study with Personal Reflections by the Researcher

This section will reflect on the literature in relation to the findings of the study as well as present personal reflections of the researcher.

As described by Clyne (1983) for Australia, Rodriguez (1980) for the United States and Cummins and Danesi (1990) for Canada, bilingual programs often serve the purpose of facilitating the transition from the heritage language to the language of the majority. However, since the proclamation of multiculturalism as an official policy of the federal government, the concept of heritage language retention as a worthwhile goal in itself has begun to prosper (Magsino, 1988; Prokop, 1990).

In Edmonton, one of the goals of the German language program, as stated by parents, was to combine German language learning with the learning of cultural traditions. Parents therefore viewed German language learning as an enriching experience for their child. This study's finding appears to be consistent with the newer trend of the literature which describes second language learning as educationally enriching.

Concerning the rationale for German language learning, the study findings appear to be largely in agreement with previous literature. Some differences should be noted, however. Torres (1988) in her article about attitudes of Spanish-speaking parents toward bilingual education stated that the parents felt that "there were both social and economic reasons for learning Spanish" (p.182). The findings in the present study largely confirm this statement although personal reasons for learning German appeared to have a clear priority over practical reasons. However, the number one reason for learning German was its usefulness in the future.

Albanese (1987) also saw a humanistic value in second language learning, a view shared by many parents who participated in this study. The multilingual student was

perceived as developing a well-rounded personality with an expanded intellectual horizon. However, the possibility that the multilingual student would develop increased cognitive ability was not explicitly mentioned by parents in this study.

The reasons which Parker (1988, 1990) described for second language learning in general, were supported in the case of German language learning in Edmonton. The difference, which became apparent however, was related to the weight given to each individual reason. Parents considered German language learning for obtaining a job, for gaining entrance into university and college, and for meeting Canada's multicultural objectives as much less important than did parents of students in second language programs when Parker conducted his research.

The Edmonton Public School Board (1981) listed 10 reasons why parents sent their child to the English-German bilingual program (See p.21). One reason was that 60% of the parents who had a child enrolled in the program spoke German themselves. In the present study the percentage was lower; only 44% of the families used German in their home. It was found that 87 fathers and 75 mothers claimed German as their first language. If these fathers and mothers were not married to each other, but instead each one of them constituted a separate family, then the above mentioned 44% would actually be higher (some of the fathers had, for example, English-speaking spouses). Prokop's (1990) finding that it is mostly parents of German origin who feel that "it was very desirable to retain German in Canada" (p.95) would then prove accurate. However, since most respondents reported being born in Canada, they were not, as Prokop stated, immigrants "who came to Canada after the immigration boom, namely in the late sixties, seventies, and eighties" (p. 205/206). In addition, it was found, that it was not just German-speaking parents who sent their child to the German bilingual program.

Several parents in this study felt that it may be much easier to learn a second language at an early age than later in a person's life. This finding is consistent with Lipton's rationale for second language learning in elementary schools. That German

language learning had positive effects on English language skills, a statement made by Quisenberry-Alvarado (1989), was not mentioned by parents who participated in this study.

When the present study was undertaken, 10 years had gone by since the first systematic evaluation of the German bilingual program (E.P.S.B., 1981, 1982, 1983). The findings of that evaluation are generally consistent with the findings of the present study in that high involvement of parents and general satisfaction with the program were confirmed in 1991. The German language program, as the findings in this study show, appears to be well established and approved of by most participants. But the E.P.S.B. had also asked why parents had decided on rare occasions to withdraw their child from the German bilingual program. In this study it was found that there were indeed parents, although their number was very small, who did not consider the program effective at all. It may then very well be that these same parents, if their perception does not change over time, will eventually decide to discontinue their child's enrolment in the German bilingual program. Unfortunately, the reasons why parents found the program ineffective were not indicated.

Implications of the Study's Findings

Based on this study's findings, several recommendations concerning the German language program can be made to teachers of German, administrators, second language program planners, German language consultants and specialists involved in curricular change and the preparation of teaching materials.

1) The first recommendation concerns the fact that most students in these programs learn German as a second language. Teaching materials, especially when imported from Germany and originally designed for students who are native

speakers of German, have to be carefully chosen in order to meet the level of language proficiency of students in Canada.

2) Secondly, because students are to varying degrees exposed to the German language at home, each class accordingly will have students with varying levels of language proficiency. Teachers consequently have to meet their students' interests and needs through various means, for instance, by establishing learning projects, grouping, peer tutoring with stronger students assisting the weaker, or learning centres.

3) In case not enough teaching materials exist to facilitate the tasks mentioned above, they should be developed locally to allow for input from parents, teachers, and students.

4) The audio-visual materials used by the staff of the Saturday schools have to be current.

5) A perceived lack of teacher commitment to the German program may have its source in a lack of fluency in German. In cases where this proves accurate the teacher should be encouraged to improve on his/her level of proficiency by taking part in a teacher exchange program or some form of language upgrading.

6) Overall, parents were very satisfied with the existing German program and very supportive of it. There is an interest within the heritage language communities in preserving their linguistic heritage. People are prepared to invest time and money towards achieving this goal. Therefore parents might be encouraged to take part in short-term heritage language courses. They could improve existing knowledge of their heritage language as well as of changes in its culture. This would make it easier for them to assist their children who are enrolled in German language programs in and outside the classroom.[10]

7) A career profile should be developed demonstrating the number of vocational opportunities that require a sound knowledge of the German language. Career

counselors and German language consultants should make a joint effort to develop such a profile which would provide parents with valuable information about career opportunities for their children.

8) Parents saw a need for updated materials being used in the German language classroom to keep students interested. For example, parents mentioned the use of textbooks from Germany, German videos and magazines for youth.

9) Parents also expressed the wish that students become better acquainted with aspects of German culture, such as the traditions of Christmas and Easter. In order to help teachers become more knowledgeable about German culture and language, the teacher exchange program should be used to a greater extent.

10) With regard to parents' program priorities, the substantial support for German in junior high and high school may indicate that the parents would like greater availability of German language learning opportunities at these levels.

11) The administrators of the Saturday schools should look into offering credit courses after regular school hours on weekdays.

12) Finally, the majority of parents believe that a second language would be useful for their children in the future. However, in order to be useful, the students must be able to converse in the language. In their comments about the German bilingual program, parents requested that a greater emphasis be placed on oral work. Teachers should therefore be using a communicative approach to the teaching of German. While parents value the correct use of the German language and therefore the teaching of grammar, they do not want grammar to be the main focus of language instruction. Parents seem to be well aware that too much emphasis on grammar could be detrimental to the students' interest in learning German.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study involved understanding parents' rationales for German language programs. It might be equally helpful to obtain an understanding of the students' perspective. Both practitioners and theorists would benefit from a deeper understanding of the ways in which students might be affected by the choice of a specific German language program, the teaching strategies employed in this program, and the learning outcomes. It would also be interesting to know what use students plan to make of their second language learning experience, and in what way they see a second language as useful for them in the future.

Another area which warrants further investigation is the status of German language teachers. A study tracking the recruitment as well as the training of these teachers would also be beneficial in that such a study could provide useful data for individual school jurisdictions, teacher education institutions, and various levels of government in addressing the demand for German language teachers.

This study was carried out in the urban setting of Edmonton and vicinity which has an active German-speaking community.[11] It would be interesting to conduct a similar study in a rural setting to see where the community rationale differs, if at all. Such a study could have implications for the parents' orientation and support practices.

Finally, a comparison between the German core and the German community-sponsored programs could prove insightful. One can assume that the core program cannot rely to the same extent on parental support and active participation as can the Saturday schools and the English-German bilingual program. It would be helpful to study how this might affect the organization and success of the German core program.

FOOTNOTES

1. The information about the German Language Diploma was provided by the German language consultant in the Language Services Branch, Alberta Education.

2. The information about tuition fees was provided by one of the principals of the Saturday schools.

3. This figure was given to the researcher by officials at Alberta Education. The figure which is published in the Alberta Education brochure *Current Initiatives 1990/91* shows the enrolment in German language courses as being lower than those cited.

4. See *The Canadian Encyclopedia,* 1988, p. 896-7. The very interesting early history (before Confederation) of German settlement is also described in *The Canadian Encyclopedia.* For a more detailed description of German immigration and settlement in Canada see McLaughlin, 1985.

5. The conference titled "Language Education -- Policy and the Ukrainian Perspective" was held May 26-27, 1989 in Edmonton, Alberta.

6. In a recent pamphlet about the English-German Bilingual Program, the Association for English-German Bilingual Education of Edmonton declares the following aims and objectives of the English-German program:

a) to develop effective communication skills in English and German;

b) to develop an understanding and appreciation of the German cultural heritage in the Canadian context;

c) to develop positive attitudes toward learning other languages and understanding other cultures.

7. The questionnaire was adapted from a survey by Parker (1988) which sought out the parents' attitudes in regard to the second language program in Alberta.

8. The enrolment figures mentioned above either derive from class lists or from information provided by the administration of the school.

9. The information about the number of junior high schools in Alberta, which are offering a German core program, was provided by Alberta Education.

10. The Heritage Language Instructor Training Project, established at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton in cooperation with the Northern Alberta Heritage Language Association, is designed for active heritage language instructors who have received limited teacher training. It is not designed for those who have completed a Bachelor of Education degree in Canada or another country. The courses will be of benefit particularly to those just beginning to instruct heritage language classes.

11. Statistics Canada (1989) gives the number of Edmontonians who use German as their home language as 4,180.

TABLE 1: German and Austrian Ethnic Origin of Canadians and Albertans

Single Ethnic Origin and Sex	In Canada	In Alberta
German	896,715	182,865
Males	454,975	93,510
Females	441,745	89,355
Austrian	24,900	3,165
Males	12,500	1,695
Females	12,405	1,475

Note. From The Nation. Ethnicity, Immigration and Citizenship (pp. 3-1, 3-121) by Statistics Canada, 1989, Ottawa, Ontario: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

TABLE 2: School Grades Attended by German Students

GRADE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	20	30	Row Total
Saturday Schools	1 3.7	1 3.7	0 0.0	2 7.4	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	4 14.8	8 29.6	3 11.1	1 3.7	2 7.4	0 0.0	0 0.0	3 11.1	1 3.7	27
Bilingual Schools	29 17.0	33 19.3	25 14.6	17 9.9	18 10.5	13 7.6	10 5.8	8 4.7	8 4.7	8 4.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 0.6	1 0.6	0 0.0	0 0.0	171
Column Total	30 15.2	34 17.1	25 12.6	19 9.6	19 9.6	13 6.6	10 5.1	12 6.1	16 8.1	11 5.5	1 0.5	2 1.0	1 0.5	1 0.5	3 1.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

K = Kindergarten
1 = Grade One
2 = Grade Two
3 = Grade Three
4 = Grade Four
5 = Grade Five
6 = Grade Six
7 = Grade Seven
8 = Grade Eight
9 = Grade Nine
10 = Grade 10
11 = Grade 11
12 = Grade 12
13 = Bilingual Program Junior High
20 = German 20
30 = German 30

TABLE 3: Number of Respondents Born in Canada

Birthplace	Frequency	Percent
Born in Canada	108	54.5
Foreign Born	89	44.9
No Response	1	0.6
Total	198	100.0

TABLE 4: Number of Respondents with Canadian-born Parents

Birthplace	Frequency	Percent
One Canadian-born Parent	13	6.5
Two Canadian-born Parents	38	19.2
Foreign-born Parents	147	74.3
Total	198	100.0

TABLE 5: Number of Respondents with Canadian-born Grandparents

Birthplace	Frequency	Percent
Two Canadian-born Grandparents	34	17.3
Three or Four Canadian-born	5	2.5
Foreign-born Grandparents	159	80.2
Total	198	100.0

TABLE 6: Father's First Language

FATHER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	11	13	14	Row Total
Saturday Schools	6 22.2	5 18.5	14 51.9	1 3.7	0 0.0	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	66 38.6	19 11.1	73 42.7	5 2.9	1 0.6	2 1.2	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	72 36.4	24 12.1	87 43.9	6 3.0	1 0.5	3 1.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = Not selected
1 = English
2 = German
3 = Polish
4 = French
5 = Dutch
6 = Iranian
8 = Arabic
11 = Hungarian
13 = Danish
14 = Persian

TABLE 7: Mother's First Language

MOTHER	0	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	11	12	14	15	Row Total
Saturday Schools	9 33.3	8 29.6	8 29.6	1 3.7	0 0.0	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	66 38.6	24 14.0	65 38.0	5 2.9	3 1.8	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	75 37.9	32 16.2	73 36.9	6 3.0	3 1.5	2 1.0	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = Not Selected
1 = English
2 = German
3 = Polish
4 = French
5 = Dutch
7 = Portuguese
8 = Arabic
9 = Indonesian
11 = Hungarian
12 = Cebuana
14 = Persian
15 = Spanish

TABLE 8: Respondent's Home Language (Language 1)

LANGUAGE 1	0	1	2	3	4	11	14	Row Total
Saturday Schools	1 3.7	22 81.5	2 7.4	2 7.4	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	6 3.5	136 79.5	21 12.3	5 2.9	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	7 3.5	158 79.8	23 11.6	7 3.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note. The home language is used more than 60% of the time in the home.

0 = Not selected
1 = English
2 = German
3 = Polish
4 = French
11 = Hungarian
14 = Persian

TABLE 9: Use of Other Languages in the Home by Respondents (Language 2)

LANGUAGE 2	0	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	13	Row Total
Saturday Schools	6 22.2	4 14.8	15 55.6	0 0.0	1 3.7	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	55 32.2	28 16.4	79 46.2	4 2.3	0 0.0	1 0.6	2 1.2	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	61 30.8	32 16.2	94 47.5	4 2.0	1 0.5	2 1.0	2 1.0	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = Not selected
1 = English
2 = German
3 = Polish
4 = French
5 = Dutch
7 = Portuguese
8 = Arabic
13 = Danish

TABLE 10: Use of Other Languages in the Home by Respondents (Language 3)

LANGUAGE 3	0	1	2	4	12	15	16	Row Total
Saturday Schools	23 85.2	2 7.4	1 3.7	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	155 90.6	3 1.8	7 4.1	3 1.8	1 0.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	178 89.9	5 2.5	8 4.0	4 2.0	1 0.5	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = Not selected
1 = English
2 = German
4 = French
12 = Cebuana
15 = Spanish
16 = Japanese

TABLE 11: Reasons for Learning German: To get a job

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	1 3.7	6 22.2	12 44.5	7 25.9	1 3.7	27
Bilingual Schools	3 1.8	23 13.5	59 34.5	52 30.4	24 14.0	10 5.8	171
Column Total	3 1.5	24 12.1	65 32.8	64 32.3	31 15.7	11 5.6	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 12: Reasons for Learning German: Entrance into university or college

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	3 11.1	14 51.9	7 25.9	3 11.1	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	2 1.2	41 24.0	74 43.3	38 22.2	13 7.5	3 1.8	171
Column Total	2 1.0	44 22.2	88 44.4	45 22.7	16 8.1	3 1.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 13: Reasons for Learning German: Travel

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	11 40.7	12 44.5	4 14.8	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	2 1.2	81 47.4	71 41.5	13 7.6	3 1.8	1 0.6	171
Column Total	2 1.0	92 46.5	83 41.9	17 8.6	3 1.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 14: Reasons for Learning German: Having another language may be useful in the future

	0	1	2	3	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	17 63.0	10 37.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	1 0.6	136 79.5	30 17.5	3 1.8	1 0.6	171
Column Total	1 0.5	153 77.3	40 20.2	3 1.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 15: Reasons for Learning German: Canada is a multicultural society

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	2 7.4	6 22.2	7 25.9	9 33.4	1 3.7	2 7.4	27
Bilingual Schools	4 2.3	32 18.7	66 38.6	41 24.0	20 11.7	8 4.7	171
Column Total	6 3.0	38 19.2	73 36.9	50 25.3	21 10.6	10 5.1	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 16: Reasons for Learning German: Staying in a German-speaking country

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	6 22.2	13 48.1	7 25.9	1 3.7	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	5 2.9	36 33.3	53 31.0	52 30.4	20 11.7	5 2.9	171
Column Total	5 2.5	42 21.2	66 33.3	59 29.8	21 10.6	5 2.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 17: Reasons for Learning German: Course credits

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	9 33.3	12 44.5	4 14.8	1 3.7	1 3.7	27
Bilingual Schools	5 2.9	24 14.0	61 35.7	53 31.0	15 8.8	13 7.6	171
Column Total	5 2.5	33 16.7	73 36.9	57 28.8	16 8.1	14 7.1	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 18: Reasons for Learning German: Communication with relatives and friends

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	14 51.9	11 40.7	2 7.4	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	3 1.8	84 49.0	49 28.7	18 10.5	9 5.3	8 4.7	171
Column Total	3 1.5	98 49.5	60 30.3	20 10.1	9 4.5	8 4.0	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 19: Reasons for Learning German: Enjoyment of learning and speaking another language

	0	1	2	3	4	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	14 51.9	12 44.4	1 3.7	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	2 1.2	87 50.8	69 40.4	11 6.4	2 1.2	171
Column Total	2 1.0	101 51.0	81 40.9	12 6.1	2 1.0	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 20: Reasons for Learning German: Learning about culture

	0	1	2	3	4	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	11 40.7	14 51.9	2 7.4	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	3 1.8	68 39.8	76 44.4	21 12.2	3 1.8	171
Column Total	3 1.5	79 39.9	90 45.5	23 11.6	3 1.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 21: Reasons for Learning German: Broadening knowledge about other people

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	17 63.0	9 33.3	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	2 1.2	85 49.7	69 40.4	13 7.6	1 0.6	1 0.6	171
Column Total	2 1.0	102 51.5	78 39.4	14 7.1	1 0.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 22: Reasons for Learning German: Personal development

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
Saturday Schools	0 0.0	13 48.1	13 48.1	1 3.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	3 1.8	83 48.5	75 43.9	6 3.5	3 1.8	1 0.6	171
Column Total	3 1.5	96 48.5	88 44.4	7 3.5	3 1.5	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

Parents were asked to circle their answer on a scale of 1 to 5

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Undecided
4 = Disagree
5 = Strongly disagree
0 = No Response

TABLE 23: Parents' Program Preference: Saturday School

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Row Total
Saturday Schools	6 22.2	8 29.6	2 7.4	4 14.8	3 11.2	0 0.0	4 14.8	27
Bilingual Schools	89 52.0	2 1.2	1 0.6	33 19.3	5 2.9	3 1.8	38 22.2	171
Column Total	95 48.0	10 5.1	3 1.5	37 18.7	8 4.0	3 1.5	42 21.2	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response 2 = Second Choice 4 = Fourth Choice 6 = Sixth Choice
1 = First Choice 3 = Third Choice 5 = Fifth Choice

TABLE 24: Parents' Program Preference: Elementary School, 30 minutes of German daily

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Row Total
Saturday Schools	11 40.7	6 22.2	4 14.8	1 3.7	1 3.7	3 11.2	1 3.7	27
Bilingual Schools	84 49.2	5 2.9	30 17.5	13 7.6	12 7.0	22 12.9	5 2.9	171
Column Total	95 48.0	11 5.6	34 17.2	14 7.1	13 6.6	25 12.6	6 3.0	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response 2 = Second Choice 4 = Fourth Choice 6 = Sixth Choice
1 = First Choice 3 = Third Choice 5 = Fifth Choice

TABLE 25: Parents' Program Preference: Elementary School, 1/2 day (bilingual program)

	0	1	2	3	4	Row Total
Saturday Schools	12 44.4	11 40.7	2 7.4	2 7.4	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	8 4.7	158 92.4	2 1.2	2 1.2	1 0.6	171
Column Total	20 10.1	169 85.4	4 2.0	4 2.0	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response 2 = Second Choice 4 = Fourth Choice 6 = Sixth Choice
1 = First Choice 3 = Third Choice 5 = Fifth Choice

TABLE 26: Parents' Program Preference: Junior High School, 40-50 minutes of German daily

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Row Total
Saturday Schools	7 25.9	2 7.4	10 37.0	1 3.7	3 11.1	2 7.4	2 7.4	27
Bilingual Schools	77 45.0	9 5.3	26 15.2	19 11.1	22 12.9	16 9.4	2 1.2	171
Column Total	84 42.4	11 5.6	36 18.2	20 10.1	25 12.6	18 9.1	4 2.0	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response 2 = Second Choice 4 = Fourth Choice 6 = Sixth Choice
1 = First Choice 3 = Third Choice 5 = Fifth Choice

TABLE 27: Parents' Program Preference: Junior High School, 1/2 day (bilingual program)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Row Total
Saturday Schools	15 55.6	2 7.4	4 14.8	4 14.8	1 3.7	0 0.0	1 3.7	27
Bilingual Schools	36 21.1	36 21.1	82 48.0	5 2.8	8 4.7	4 2.3	0 0.0	171
Column Total	51 25.8	38 19.2	86 43.4	9 4.5	9 4.5	4 2.0	1 0.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response
1 = First Choice
2 = Second Choice
3 = Third Choice
4 = Fourth Choice
5 = Fifth Choice
6 = Sixth Choice

TABLE 28: Parents' Program Preference: High School, 50-60 minutes daily

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Row Total
Saturday Schools	8 29.7	4 14.8	0 0.0	10 37.0	1 3.7	4 14.8	0 0.0	27
Bilingual Schools	38 22.2	29 17.0	6 3.5	73 42.7	9 5.3	9 5.3	7 4.0	171
Column Total	46 23.2	33 16.7	6 3.0	83 41.9	10 5.1	13 6.6	7 3.5	198 100.0%

Note.

0 = No Response
1 = First Choice
2 = Second Choice
3 = Third Choice
4 = Fourth Choice
5 = Fifth Choice
6 = Sixth Choice

TABLE 29: Evaluation of Existing German Program by Respondents

	Highly effective	Generally effective	Moderately effective	Not effective	Row Total
Saturday Schools	8 29.6	15 55.6	5 18.5	0 0.0	28[a]
Bilingual Schools	98 57.3	59 34.5	12 7.0	3 1.8	172[a]
Column Total	106 53.5	74 37.4	17 8.6	3 1.5	200[a] 101.2%

[a] One respondent in each category gave more than one answer.

TABLE 30: Support for Existing German Program by Respondents

Kinds of Parental Support	Saturday Schools (N=27)	Bilingual Schools (N=171)
Volunteer Work	14 51.9	106 62.0
Driving the Child to School	19 70.4	100 58.5
Financial Support (Donations)	13 48.1	87 50.9
Fund Raising	11 40.7	82 48.0
Committee Involvement	6 22.2	23 13.5
Oral/Written Promotion	11 40.7	70 40.9
Other	1 3.7	11 6.4

TABLE 31: Comments by Respondents: Every child should have to study German

	Agree	Disagree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	2 7.4	0 0.0	25 92.6	27
Bilingual Schools	4 2.3	1 0.6	166 97.1	171
Column Total	6 3.0	1 0.5	191 96.5	198 100.0%

Note. The questionnaire required that parents would indicate their support for a certain statement by placing a check mark on the appropriate line. The category "No Response" in Tables 31 through 39 therefore means no explicit support.

TABLE 32: Comments by Respondents: Every child should have to study a second language, but should be allowed to choose the language

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	19 70.4	8 29.6	27
Bilingual Schools	109 63.7	62 36.3	171
Column Total	128 64.6	70 35.4	198 100.0%

TABLE 33: Comments by Respondents: German should be available in every elementary school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	13 48.1	14 51.9	27
Bilingual Schools	79 46.2	92 53.8	171
Column Total	92 46.5	106 53.5	198 100.0%

TABLE 34: Comments by Respondents: German should be available in every junior high school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	18 66.7	9 33.3	27
Bilingual Schools	85 49.7	86 50.3	171
Column Total	103 52.0	95 48.0	198 100.0%

TABLE 35: Comments by Respondents: German should be available in every high school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	21 77.8	6 22.2	27
Bilingual Schools	100 58.5	71 41.5	171
Column Total	121 61.1	77 38.9	198 100%

TABLE 36: Comments by Respondents: Languages other than German should be available beginning in elementary school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	15 55.6	12 44.4	27
Bilingual Schools	129 75.4	42 24.6	171
Column Total	144 72.7	54 27.3	198 100.0%

TABLE 37: Comments by Respondents: Languages other than German should be available beginning in junior high school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	16 59.3	11 40.7	27
Bilingual Schools	69 40.4	102 59.6	171
Column Total	85 42.9	113 57.1	198 100.0%

TABLE 38: Comments by Respondents: Languages other than German should be available beginning in high school

	Agree	No Response	Row Total
Saturday Schools	16 59.3	11 40.7	27
Bilingual Schools	66 38.6	105 61.4	171
Column Total	82 41.4	116 58.6	198 100.0%

TABLE 39: Who should decide whether a student takes a second language: Student, parents, or both?

	STUDENT			PARENTS			BOTH		
	Agree	No Response	Row Subtotal	Agree	No Response	Row Subtotal	Agree	No Response	Row Subtotal
Saturday Schools	2 7.4	25 92.6	27	0 0.0	27 100.0	27	25 92.6	2 7.4	27
Bilingual Schools	4 2.3	167 97.7	171	31 18.1	140 81.9	171	127 74.3	44 25.7	171
Column Total	6 3.0	192 97.0	198 100.0	31 15.7	167 84.3	198 100.0	152 76.8	46 23.2	198 100.0%

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Appendices

Appendix A	=	Covering letter
Appendix B	=	Questionnaire
Appendix C	=	Principals' letters

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE
regarding
German Language Programs

May/June 1991

Dear Parent:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide information that will help to improve the German language program. This questionnaire is part of my research study to obtain a Master's Degree in Education at the University of Alberta. With the cooperation of your child's school, I am carrying out a survey of German language programs in Edmonton. I am particularly interested in determining your **reasons** for sending your child/children to a German language program. I would also like to know how strong your **support** is for German language programs, and whether existing programs meet your **priorities**.

Please assist me by filling out the attached questionnaire as **completely** as possible. If you wish to add further **comments**, write please on the back of the questionnaire pages, or add additional pieces of paper. Your comments will be helpful to me.

All answers will be kept **confidential**. To ensure this, please do not put your name on the questionnaire.

This survey will provide valuable information to the German community and the institutions that are involved in the delivery of German language programs. I'd be very grateful if you would take some time to complete the questionnaire. If you have any questions or concerns, please phone me at 452-4024 in Edmonton.

Please return the questionnaire to the school your child/children attend/s. (Deadline June 07,1991)

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours very truly,

Hilde Alte

Hilde Alte,
Graduate Student,
University of Alberta.

Encl. Questionnaire

Parent Questionnaire **May 1991**

All information provided in this questionnaire will be kept confidential.

Check in the right margin the number which corresponds to your answer.

Check here

A. Please indicate which parent is completing this questionnaire: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

1) Father 2) Mother 3) Guardian or other

B. How long have you and your family been in Canada?

(please check the statement which applies to you.)

4. I was not born in Canada 4. _____

5. I was born in Canada 5. _____

6. Only one of my own parents was born in Canada 6. _____

7. Both of my parents were born in Canada 7. _____

8. Not more than two grandparents were born in Canada 8. _____

9. Three or four grandparents were born in Canada 9. _____

(contd.)

check here

C. Your child brought this questionnaire home to you. Please write the number which corresponds to the grade your child is in. 10. _____

D. Which German program does your child attend? (Some children may be involved in more than one program at the same time).
Please check the number/s.

11. Saturday Schools (Edelweiss or Trinity Church) 11. _____

12. Bilingual German program - elementary school 12. _____

13. Bilingual German program - junior high. 13. _____

Senior high school programs:

14. German 10 14. _____

15. German 20 15. _____

16. German 30 16. _____

E. Do you have other children who are taking German in school? Yes or No [17]. 17. _____

If yes, please use space [17a] and put the numeral(s) 11 - 16 which corresponds to their program as in the previous question. 17a. _____

F. Father's first language if not English [18] 18. _____

Mother's first language if not English [19] 19. _____

G. What language is used most often in your home? (more than 60%) [20a] 20a. _____

What other language(s) are used? [20b,c] 20b. _____

20c. _____

H. Please check any comment that matches your opinion about the German language program in the schools:

	check here
21. Every child should have to study German.	21. _____
22. Every child should have to study a second language, but should be allowed to choose the language.	22. _____
23. German should be available for students who want to take it in every	23.
a) elementary school,	a. _____
b) junior high school,	b. _____
c) senior high school.	c. _____
24. Languages other than German should be available for students who want to take one beginning in	24.
a) elementary school,	a. _____
b) junior high school,	b. _____
c) senior high school.	c. _____
25. Whether or not a student takes a second language is a decision that should be left up to the	25.
a) student,	a. _____
b) parents,	b. _____
c) student and his/her parents.	c. _____

(contd.)

check here

I. Given the choice, which of the following programs do you prefer?
Please use the numbers 1,2,3 and so on to indicate your first choice, second choice, etc.

26. Community/ Saturday school programs. 26. _____

27. Elementary school, 30 minutes daily. 27. _____

28. Elementary school, 1/2 day (bilingual program) 28. _____

29. Junior high, 40 - 50 minutes daily 29. _____

30. Junior high, 1/2 day (bilingual) 30. _____

31. Senior high, 50 - 60 minutes daily 31. _____

J. Do you think that the program that your child is currently involved in is effective in helping him/her learn German? Please check the statement that applies to you.

32. Highly effective 32. _____

33. Generally effective 33. _____

34. Moderately effective 34. _____

35. Not effective 35. _____

check here

K. In what way do you personally support the German language program? Please check the ones that apply.

36. Volunteer work. 36. _____

37. Driving the child to school. 37. _____

38. Financial support, (donations). 38. _____

39. Fundraising. 39. _____

40. Committee involvement. 40. _____

41. Oral/written promotion of the program. 41. _____

42. Other. _____ 42. _____

_____

_____

(contd.)

L. How important on a scale of 1 to 5 are each of the following reasons for learning German?
Please circle your answer.

(1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = undecided; 4 = disagree; 5 = strongly disagree)

My child should learn German	strongly agree		-------		strongly disagree
a) to get a job	1	2	3	4	5
b) for entrance into University or College	1	2	3	4	5
c) to travel	1	2	3	4	5
d) having another language may be useful in the future	1	2	3	4	5
e) because Canada is a multi-cultural society	1	2	3	4	5
f) to communicate with relatives and friends	1	2	3	4	5
g) for the enjoyment of learning and speaking another language	1	2	3	4	5
h) to broaden his/her knowledge about other people	1	2	3	4	5
i) to learn about culture	1	2	3	4	5
j) to live in a foreign country	1	2	3	4	5
k) to earn course credits	1	2	3	4	5
l) for personal development	1	2	3	4	5

m) other, please specify:_____

_____

If you do not consider it effective, which changes would you like made?
Please feel free to discuss your reasons on the other side of this page, if necessary.

_____

_____

_____

_____

What I like about my child's German program is:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What I do not like about my child's German program is:

_____

_____

_____

_____

I think the program could be improved by:

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide me with this important information.
Please return the questionnaire to the school your child/children attend/s, at your earliest convenience.(Deadline June 07,1991)

ALLENDALE SCHOOL

"In the Service of Children"

6415 - 106 STREET, EDMONTON, ALBERTA T6H 2V5
TELEPHONE 434-6756

KEITH PARKER
Principal

DAVE IRONS
Assistant Principal

May 28, 1991

Dear Parents:

The Edmonton Public School Board has given permission to Hilde Alte, a graduate student at the University of Alberta, to conduct a research study regarding German language programs in Edmonton.

I think that the survey will provide useful information which can be used to improve the programs being provided to students.

I hope that you will take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please return it to school in the attached envelope (no later than Monday, June 3).

Yours truly,

Dave Irons/for

Keith Parker
Principal, Allendale

KP/ay

RIDEAU PARK SCHOOL

10605 - 42 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 3Z9
Telephone 437-0010

May 28, 1991

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would encourage you to participate in the attached survey to provide assistance to Hilde Alte, a graduate student in the German Languages Program, University of Alberta.

The information gained from your input would prove useful to both our Association For English-German Bilingual Education of Edmonton and to our German language program at Rideau Park School.

To ensure that the results gained from this study are reliable, at least 80 percent of our parents/guardians must complete this survey. Please take your valuable time to provide this information.

Please return the questionnaire to the principal by Friday, June 7, 1991.

Sincerely,

Don Nordheimer

Don Nordheimer
Principal